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PANSIES.—SEE POEM ON PAGE 2.

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PANSIES.

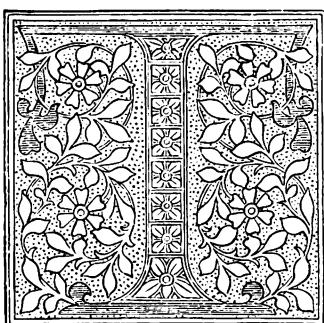
BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

DEAR baby, with the dreaming eyes,
What makes you look so shyly wise?
What secrets have the pansies told,
With rustling petals tinged with gold?
What pretty dances sent to greet
Your childish thought in whispers sweet?
Pray have they introduced themselves
As dainty, quaint, imprisoned elves
Forever lifting faces fair
To coax a kiss from sun and air?
It's plain that you have found it out,
A legend I have held in doubt.
'Tis said that oft the flowers talk
With nodding leaf or bending stalk,
And prattle tales in murmurs deep,
When all the world is fast asleep.
'Twere quite in vain alas! for me
To listen, since I've lost the key.
Somewhere in happy fields it lies,
Oh, very close to paradise;
'Tis gone from me, but sages say
Wee children find it every day.
I'm sure our darling comprehends
The pansies' speech, and calls them friends.
Ah! little one, you do not know
What lofty people long ago
Stooped down while purple pansies taught
Great Shakspere deemed them made for thought,
And Milton blent their fragrance well
With violets and asphodel;
Grand poets these. "And what are they?"
Why, just what you are, child, to-day.
For them the breezes and the birds
Sang stories not in need of words;
And every tree and bower and nook
They read as 'twere an open book.
One thing is certain, baby dear,
That He who puts the pansies here,
Made from some pattern in the sky,
And flecked with such a radiant dye,
Is ever watching from above,
And keeps us in His constant love—
A love that never will forget
The darling 'mid these pansies set.

AMONG THE STROLLERS.

BY E. HAROURT BURRAGE.

I.



HE fair at Rinkston was over, and the booths had disappeared from the piece of waste ground near the cattle market, where it had been held by charter for many, many years. The order had been given by the Mayor, and everything was cleared away within an hour of midnight on the second day. But the strollers did not depart, simply because they had nowhere to go just then. They gathered their vans on a small patch of building ground in the outskirts of the town, let to them for a modest sum by its owner.

The scene was picturesque enough, and to the lovers of a vagabond life quite a paradise. Donkeys, ponies, dogs, men, women, and children mixed up together, moving about during the day, and gathered round the fires lighted at night to get the warmth they needed, the bronzed wanderers presented a pretty picture to the eye. It is with them at night we first have to do.

Pitched here and there among the vans were small tents, and in one of these two men lay on some loose straw—one, a stout, burly fellow of forty, dressed in well-worn vel-

veteen, smoking a short clay pipe; and the other, some years his senior, pinched and worn about the face, mending a breast-pipe, or mouth-organ, as it is sometimes called—an instrument generally associated with a drum in the performance of "Punch and Judy."

"What I say is—give it up," said the stout man, flicking off the wick of a candle burning in a ginger-beer bottle near his elbow. "What's the good of trying to live on a thing that's dead? It can't be done, Fiddler."

Fiddler sighed, fixed the breast-pipe in his waistcoat, tried it by running his mouth up and down, and blowing into it, and then sighed again.

"But what's most of us to do?" he asked. "It's all very well for you, Gypsy George, for you are strong and young enough for a new life; but I—what am I to do? You wouldn't have me go to the work-house?"

"You'll have to go somewhere soon," said Gypsy George, grimly. "What did you take this fair?"

"One pun' five."

"And what will you earn on the road to Northley?"

"Ay! that's where it is," sighed Fiddler. "We make nothing on the road now. People will stare at us, but they don't appreciate, and they don't pay. It's disheartening to me; but I bear it better than Binder—he is going melancholy mad."

"What's come of him to-night?"

"Oh, he's gone into the town to roam about, and look at the rich things in the shop windows. It's a fancy of his, and we think it does him good."

"That's Binder's step," said Gypsy George, listening; "but he isn't alone; there's somebody with him."

The opening of the tent was pushed aside, and a man about the age of the speaker, but of slighter build, and long, thin, pinched features that gave him a queer expression, entered, followed by a lad of about twelve years of age, good-looking, well dressed, and with a face that spoke of a bright, loving nature. Obeying a motion of Binder's hand, he remained at the mouth of the tent.

"What's this?" asked Gypsy George, roughly.

"Can't you be quiet for once?" said Binder, sourly. "You ain't got everybody's sense and your own. I've got a prize here, I think."

"More likely something that will get you into trouble," said the other.

"That's your opinion, George," returned Binder, dropping his voice. "But I say there's money hanging to him. He's a runaway, and wants to be a stroller."

"Heaven help the boy!" exclaimed Fiddler. "Send him home again."

"Ay, send him home," growled Gypsy George; "there's nothing but trouble to be made out of runaways of that sort."

"Come here, my lad," said the burly one, "nearer, and let me have a look at you."

The boy drew nearer, but kept sufficiently aloof to be out of the reach of the gypsy's hand. The eyes of Fiddler beamed with compassion as he caught a better view of the slim, graceful figure, and the bright innocent face.

"So you want to be a stroller?" said Gypsy George.

"Yes, I do indeed," the boy replied.

"And to wear silk tights and spangles, to do clever tricks, and to be applauded by big audiences?" continued the gypsy, with a slight smile upon his face.

"You are laughing at me," said the boy, quickly.

"On my honor, no," said the burly one, bowing with much reverence; "couldn't dream of such a thing. You will find there is very little joking in the strolling profession. What is your name?"

"Will you please call me Harry Vernon?"

"We will call you anything you like, but that is not your name."

"No," replied the boy, hesitating, "and I would rather not say who I am, if you please."

"If you take my advice," said Fiddler, "you won't."

"Hold your tongue!" said Binder, angrily. "There never was such a man for interrupting in what doesn't concern him. Leave the boy to me and George, will you?"

"I suppose I had better do so," sighed Fiddler; "but I don't think this is the sort of place for a lad like him."

"Barker's lot goes on to-night," said Binder to Gypsy George; "you had better take the boy and go on with them. You are sure to pitch for a few days at Mayfield, and Fiddler and I will catch you up there."

II.

Barker's "lot" consisted of a tumbling troupe of three, a merriman of the most melancholy order, a man who played the cornopean, Mrs. Barker, who took the money when there was any to take, two Barker children, who ate and drank when there was anything to eat and drink, and Barker himself, who did the talking outside his show at fair-time, and rarely opened his lips on any other occasion.

Mr. and Mrs. Barker were having their supper in one of his vans; he was owner of three, and the rest of his family and troupe were partaking of it anyhow and anywhere, the children on the steps, Mr. Merriman on one of the wheels, and the rest beside an expiring fire on the turf, when Gypsy George and Harry Vernon came up. Simply ordering the children off the steps by telling them to "come out of it," the man marched into the van.

"Ha, George!" said Mr. Barker, hospitably, "just in time for supper. What there is you are welcome to."

"Thanky," replied George, "but I've come to ask you for more than that. I want you to take a friend of mine on with ye to-night. Come up with ye, Mister Harry Vernon; nobody will eat you or look on you as intruding."

As the boy came in, Mrs. Barker, a woman of rather masculine build, but not ill-looking, started, and glanced at her husband who sat unmoved and said nothing.

"Want's to be a stroller, does this lad," said George, "and I think of apprenticing him to you."

"Can't be done," said Mrs. Barker, briefly.

"Why not?"

"Because it can't. You know we dursn't do it."

"Oh, yes, ye will. But give the boy some supper, and while he's eating it I'll have a talk with you outside. Barker had better stop with the boy."

From the first moment that Harry Vernon had been among these people it was plain that he was struggling with a feeling of intense disappointment. Whatever ideas he may have formed of strolling life, drawn most probably from books that depict a stroller's existence as a round of excitement and pleasure, had been rudely upset. The filth, squalor, and undoubtedly poverty of his new companions were repulsive to him, but still he did not shrink. He was delicate, but he had a brave face, and eyes that never could grow dim with fear, so he accepted everything as it came with a calmness that was akin to contentment.

Mrs. Barker and Gypsy George left the van, and Barker, having washed one of the plates in a pail of water in a corner, filled it with savory Irish stew. "Eat, my lad," said the showman; "you are welcome."

If Harry had known more of his host, he would have accepted this as a very pressing invitation to eat. Barker, when inviting a friend to partake of food with him, rarely said more than "Have a bit," and it was his manner more than his words that induced Harry to endeavor to do justice to the savory fare.

But he could not eat, and after several efforts apologized for his lack of appetite.

"I really am not hungry," he said. "I had some supper at home."

Barker then proceeded to put the things away, and

while thus occupied two children, a boy and a girl, sat on the top of the steps staring at Harry, who with quick eyes was taking in the various domestic arrangements of the van. The showman, in the act of drawing up a three-legged stool to sit down, became aware of the presence of his offspring, to whom he said, with a wave of his arm, "To bed," and they disappeared like a pair of young sprites.

When they were gone, Barker closed the door, and, resuming his seat, stared intently at Harry for a minute or more.

"My lad," he said, suddenly, "what for?"

Harry started from his dream, and stared at the showman, who again said, "What for?"

"I do not understand you," Harry said.

"What for?" repeated Barker, puffing vigorously at his pipe. "Why here? Why among us?"

"I wanted—to—get—away from—home," said Harry, slowly, the last word sticking in his throat for a moment ere he could utter it.

"Oh, that's it!" said Barker, and again he puffed at his tobacco with energy.

"I thought you would take me without any inquiries, and be glad of me," continued Harry, fixing his honest eyes on the showman's. "I may not be very strong, but I am willing to be trained and taught, and I will work very hard—indeed, I will."

"It's no good working," said Barker, shaking his head. "One trick's as good as a dozen nowadays—at least with us. My troupe have done the same things over and over for years."

After this conversational outburst he appeared to be rather exhausted, and, pulling out a bottle of beer from behind an iron stove, he filled a tin cup with the contents. Having first tasted it, he offered it to Harry, who declined it.

"Right, my lad," he said; "no good to anybody—but use is use, and there's an end of it."

"Things here," said Harry, looking round him with a hesitating air, "are not what I thought they would be."

"Maybe not," said Barker, refilling his pipe.

"I thought I should find you all making merry," said Harry—"cracking jokes, and singing songs, and perhaps dancing."

"What for?" asked Barker.

"Oh, I don't know!" returned the boy, "except that I thought your life was a very merry one."

"Did ye?" said Barker; "but there you're wrong."

Harry was rather astonished; but after a moment's pause he returned to the subject. "But you are merry sometimes, are you not?" he asked.

"Uncommon," returned Barker, with a bitterly sarcastic gleam in his eye, "especially after a wet fair, and there's no money to put on the drum."

"Why should you put it on the drum?" asked Harry.

"We pays our people on it," said Barker, adding, after a brief pause, "when we have anything to pay 'em with."

"But don't you ever sing songs about how jolly it is to be a stroller?" inquired Harry, with a visible sadness gathering upon him.

"Never heard o' one," said Barker.

"And don't you have feasts, and dance till the morn appears?"

"We drink a bit," said Barker, reflecting, "when we can get it, and we eats when we has it, but for the t'other, what's there to dance for?"

"But I should like to know—" Harry began again, when Barker interrupted him.

"My lad," he said, "I've talked more to you than I've done to any man for years, and my mind ain't equal to it. Bear off a bit. You've joined us, and if you want to know, wait and see."

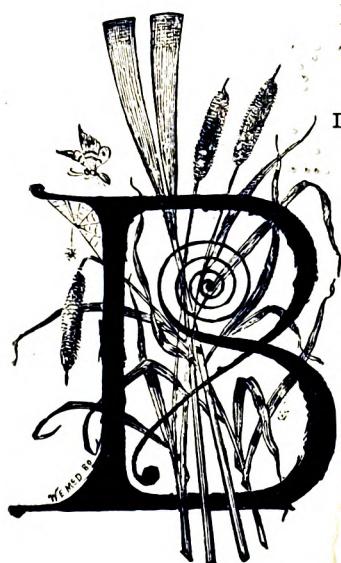
IN A HOUSE-BOAT.

A Journal.

BY

DINAH MULOCK CRAIK,

AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."



Y eight o'clock on the third morning the house-boat was as noisy as a magpie's nest. We had arranged for a long expedition with a boatman who knew each lock, weir, lasher, every danger on the river, and leaving to him all the care of the voyage, we determined to enjoy ourselves solely. But before then I must needs arrange something much sadder—our going home.

There was a general moan: "Must we go home? Only from Monday to Saturday—the inside of a week! And we should have liked to stay here a whole month!"

Vainly I represented that even had the benevolent owner allowed it—and he could not, for there was another party of his friends waiting to come in whenever we went out—our affectionate families could not possibly spare us after Saturday.

But I stretched the time to the very longest limit, and then, according to my habit, was mildly firm. "When mother says No," observed one who ought to know it, "there is an end of the matter." So there was.

Our morning row was delightful but brief, since the four girls and the boat had to sit for their portraits, as they appear on this page, the young artist having afterward drawn herself (from memory) sitting in the bow. But we had scarcely reached home when there came the most awful down-pour.

I had warned them of this, having read in the *Times* that a "depression" was travelling over from America—all our "depressions" do come from America—but of course they did not believe it. Even now, though the sky was a leaden gray, and the river too, bubbling all over with the sheets of rain which pelted on our flat roof, and our "front garden" and "back garden" (as we called the two ends of the barge, using one as a scullery, the other as a drawing-room) were soaking with wet, my five girls would hardly believe in their hard lot.

"It must clear; it will clear," persisted they. But it did not—for six mortal hours. We soon ceased to lament, and rejoiced that we were safe under cover. We made the best of the afternoon; we read, we drew, we played games. Then we took to music, did, or tried to do, some catches and rounds; finally our eldest gave us Mendelssohn on the little harmonium, and our youngest, in her clear, fresh, pa-

thetic voice, sang us Schubert's songs from *Wilhelm Meister*, until a boat-load of soaked white-jacketed youths were seen to stop under the opposite bank listening to the Lurlei-like strain. (N. B.—I hope it did not cause their deaths from rheumatic fever.)

But the worst times come to an end, if you only wait long enough, and by 7 P. M. we looked out on a cloudless sky and a shining river. Ere we started for another sunset row Adam said, briefly, "There's fish for supper, ma'am." He too had utilized the wet day, and there were a dozen small dace, caught by some fishing-tackle he had borrowed, swimming in a bucket, alike indifferent to the hook they had swallowed and the prospect of being speedily fried. But Adam's pride in his fishing exploit was a little lessened an hour after, when we found him with mingled laughter and anxiety gazing after a majestic swan, which had swallowed the baited hook, and then swam away, carrying rod and line after him. It took a long chase to recover both, but they were recovered; and so we concluded was the swan, for he re-appeared shortly after as if nothing had ever happened to him, and ate the food we threw out to him with his usual dignity and grace.

The last day had now come—at least our last whole day—Friday. We resolved to make the most of it, going up the river in the forenoon, and down the river in the afternoon, taking with us a frugal meal of bread and butter, milk and cherries, also the towing-rope, in case rowing up-stream should be too difficult and too long a business. There is a towing-path all the way along the Thames at one side or other, and we used often to see a young man or even a girl, or sometimes both amiably harnessed together, pulling along a whole boatful of people with the greatest ease. We thought the towing, if necessary, would be great fun for the after-dinner row.

Our morning row was rather a failure; it was too "gentle." The river flowed between civilized shores, dotted with splendid villas. Its banks were elegantly boarded in for promenades; its very boat-houses were palatial residences. No osiers, rushes, and lovely water-plants; the very water-lilies looked "cultivated." We agreed that our own bit of river was much the best, and that not a single house-boat—we passed half a dozen at least—was half so pretty or commodious as our *Pinafore*. Content and hungry, we came back to it, determined to eat our dinner in ten minutes, and be off again. But fate forbade.



"Listen!—that's surely thunder. And how black the river looks! It's bubbling, too, all over. Hark!"

Crash! crash! and down came the rain, regular thunder rain, continuing without a moment's pause for three hours. Drenched boat-loads of unlucky pleasure-seekers kept passing our windows, struggling for the hospitable inn opposite. Is there any satisfaction in watching the misfortunes of our neighbors? Was it the weakness or meanness of our human nature which made us congratulate ourselves that the rain had come on exactly when it



ON THE TOW-PATH.

did, and so found us under safe shelter, watching mildly these poor half-drowned creatures, instead of being in the same plight ourselves?

"Still, yesterday evening was lovely; to-night may be the same," said the girls, determined to keep up their spirits. And when at last the rain did actually cease, and a bit of blue sky appeared, "enough to make a cat a jacket," they set to work, bailing out and drying the boat, protesting the while that this soppy and quite unnecessary occupation was "delightful."

Fortune favors the brave. It was seven o'clock before we were able to start, but that last row was the loveliest we had on the Thames. Such a sunset! Such views of osier beds, and islands of tall rushes, and masses of woodland, and smooth green parks with century-old trees, and noisy weirs, and dark, silent locks! We had grown fearless or desperate, and determined to go through two locks. Some of us, I think, would have gone on to London, drifting contentedly down the stream; but motherly wisdom saw the sun fast dropping and the twilight darkening, and insisted on turning homeward, and was obeyed.

Only once, when the crimson sunset, reflected in the river from behind a fringe of low trees, made a picture too lovely to resist, our artist implored to be "dropped," as was her habit. This being impossible at that hour, we compromised by "lying to" near the bank while she painted, or tried to paint, in the dim light. We sang a quantity of old songs—duets and glees. In the pauses the corn-crake put in his note from the shore, and one or two other birds wakened up with a sleepy chirp; then all sank into silence, and there was only the quiet river and quiet sky, up which the crescent moon was sailing brighter and brighter. I think, however long my girls may live, and whatever may happen to them, they will never forget that night.

It was almost night, and brilliant moonlight, when we reached our "'appy 'ome." Our consciences were not quite easy, for we had Adam's little daughter on board with us, and we found him anxiously watching for us.

"Did you think anything had happened—that we were all drowned?"

"Yes, ma'am, I did," said he, briefly. Poor Adam! Shut up in his floating prison, he had evidently not spent the happiest of half-hours. But he forgave us, and we at least had been happy—and it was our last night.

About eleven or so, when the magpie's nest was all quiet, chancing to look out I saw the loveliest moonset. The large bright crescent close upon the horizon shone in

a cloudless western sky, and was reflected in the river, with a gulf of darkness between. After watching it for several minutes, determined to see the last of it, I went back into my cabin and took up a book—some sketches by Miss Thackeray. One on "Friendship" interested and touched me so much that I read on to the end, then started up and rushed to the window. It was too late—my moon had set! Only a faint circle of light in the sky, and another fainter still on the river, showed where she had been.

I went back to bed a little sad at heart and vexed with myself for having missed the lovely sight by about a minute, after having sat up on purpose to watch it. Too late—too late! Why can not we always do, not only the right thing, but at the right time!

My girls had apparently discovered this secret. Long before ever I was stirring, though old birds are usually early birds, I heard a great clatter and chatter in the parlor, or saloon. It was our two "little ones," broom in hand, with their dresses tucked up apron fashion, cleaning and sweeping, throwing down tea-leaves, taking up rags, dusting tables and chairs, washing china—in short, fairly turning the house (or house-boat) out of windows. The delighted laughter with which they watched the dust and débris sail down the river, a sort of floating island of rubbish, was quite infectious.

"No, no; we can't eat any breakfast until we have done our work. We are determined to leave the parlor as neat and beautiful as we found it," which noble sentiment I thoroughly shared.

After breakfast there were the cabins to put in order, and all the packing to be done. It was eleven before we felt free to enjoy ourselves; and then the sky looked so threatening that I protested against the long expedition that was being planned. Suppose it rained—in fact, it had



"GOING TO MAKE THE FIRE."

rained a little—and we all got wet through, and had to start for our long railway journey without any possibility of drying ourselves. So, in deference to the prudent mother, who never denied them anything she could help, the good girls cheerfully gave up their pleasure, and we spent a delightful hour or two in paddling about close at home, and gathering water-lilies.

This last proceeding was not so easy as it looked. Water-lilies have such thick, strong stalks, and grow in such deep water, that in plucking them one is apt to overbalance the boat, especially if fully laden. We had to land half of our crew on an osier-island, while the others floated about, guiding themselves with the boat-hook, and cautiously grasping at the dazzling white blossoms and plate-like leaves which covered the surface of the water for many yards. A risky proceeding it always is, gathering water-lilies; but oh! when they were gathered, what a handful—nay, armful—of beauty and delicate perfume did we carry back!

And we got back not a minute too soon. We had scarcely sat down to dinner—our last dinner—at which we laughed much, perhaps to keep our spirits up, when, flash! crash! the storm was upon us. A more fearful thunder-storm I never saw. The river was one boiling sheet of plashing rain, the clouds were black as night; between them and the water the forked lightning danced, and once when, after a loud clap of thunder, a column of white smoke burst out from the wood opposite, we felt sure the bolt had fallen.

For two whole hours the storm raged, and then, just as we were wondering if the carriage would venture to come for us, and how we should accomplish our seven-mile drive without being drenched to the skin, the rain ceased, the blue sky appeared, and the world looked as the world feels after the thunder-storm in Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*.

And so, with contented and thankful hearts, although a little melancholy, and with the very tune of the reapers' "Thanksgiving Song" out of the said *Symphony* ringing in our ears, we left our house-boat and our beautiful and beloved river, and went our several ways home.

"We may never in our lives have such another week!" said one of the girls, mournfully, which is very possible. But ought we not to be glad that we ever had it at all?

One particular thankfulness I had, and I can not end without uttering it, as a testimonial to my five girls, and a bit of tender advice to many others.

One day we passed a rather pathetic sight: a motherly hen standing on the brink of the river, and chuckling mournfully to a troop of lively young ducklings which were swimming about in utter indifference to her and her evident anxiety.

"Poor old thing!" said one of the most mischievous of my girls, "she is just like—ahem!"

I felt the soft impeachment, and, conscience-smitten, tried to smile.

"But it really is very hard for the poor creature," gently observed another. "Once we had a hen with a fine brood of ducklings; they went into the water; the mother stood awhile watching them in an agony, and then she followed them."

"And what became of her?"

"She floated awhile, paddling with her feet, and puffing out her feathers, and then she sank, and was drowned."

And perhaps if my girls had not every one of them, however lively and daring by nature, been thoughtful, cautious, considerate, using that common-sense prudence which is the truest unselfishness both for themselves and me, I should during our six days in the house-boat have led the life—and might finally have died the death—of that poor old hen. Instead of which not one of the five was, I think, more truly happy than I.

THE END.

THE LOST CITY;* OR, THE BOY EXPLORERS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

BY DAVID KER.

CHAPTER IV.

STARTLING A KING.

"TOM, I feel as if there were something *wrong* here, somehow."

Ernest had been very quiet for some moments, and a boy of his age is not often quiet for any length of time unless something has made rather a strong impression upon him. His companion had clearly shared his misgivings, for he replied almost at once:

"Well, old fellow, I wouldn't have said that *first*, for fear you should laugh at me; but now that *you've* said it, I must confess I feel pretty bad myself, though I don't know why."

Our heroes were looking down from the balcony of a lofty Eastern house upon the motley crowd that eddied through one of the principal streets of Cabool, in which they had spent just three days when this conversation took place. So far, at least, they had nothing to complain of. They were lodged in a fine house in one of the best quarters of the city, not far from the Ameer's own palace. They had been shown over the fortifications of the Bala-Hissar (citadel) by the Afghan commandant in charge of it. They had been presented to Major Cavagnari, the resident agent of the English government, who received them with frank, soldier-like cordiality, and laughingly hoped that their quality as *attachés* to a Russian mission would not prevent their giving him the pleasure of their company to dinner.

Every one, in fact, had been as hospitable and friendly as possible; but neither the universal kindness shown to them, nor the wonderful panorama of new costumes and new faces that met them at every turn, nor the quaint barbaric picturesqueness of the ancient city itself, could wholly banish the dim, haunting sense of coming evil, which (little inclined as either of them was to trouble himself about such fancies) weighed upon them more than they would have cared to own.

"I think it must be what my father told us about this old place that makes us feel bad," said Tom Hilton, after a pause. "You remember that yarn he spun us at Tashkent, how, when the English army was here in 1841, the Afghans rose all of a sudden, and massacred them; and how poor old Burnes and Macnaghten, and a lot of the officers, were brought into the palace under promise of safeguard, and then Akbar Khan's crowd broke in and murdered 'em all. Of course that took place a long time ago. Everything is different now, and it can never happen again; but still it isn't nice to think of, is it?"

"No," said Ernest, "and so I vote we *don't* think of it. Let's start out for a walk, and see if we can find that tomb of Baber,† which they talk so much about. Erskine's history says it stands on a low hill somewhere out yonder, about a mile from the town. Come along."

Away they went accordingly, elbowing their way through the crowd that filled the narrow dusty lanes of the city. During the day it would have been a very easy matter for them to make their way along, but as the hour of sunset and of leaving off business approached the highways became more and more crowded. Parties going in different directions would meet and jostle each other, and at times the boys had no little difficulty to avoid becoming separated.

* Begun in No. 207, HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE.

† Baber, the great-grandson of the Tartar Emperor Timour, conquered Northern India in 1526, and founded the empire of the Great Mogul. He died in 1530.

Hitherto, in order to avoid any risk of losing their way or getting into trouble, the two lads had never gone out unattended by the Colonel's Afghan servant, Sikander. But to-day Sikander was absent, no one knew where, and our heroes, not caring to wait until he came back, decided upon trying to find their way for themselves.

As they went along, almost every step brought before them some object which if seen in London or New York would have gathered a bigger crowd than any circus. Here, a huge bony fellow from the deserts of Beloochistan swaggered past, with his short curved sword at his side, and his coarse black hair twisted into greasy curls which straggled from under his white turban over his long loose frock. There, a tall, fierce-looking Afghan in a pointed red cap, with the scar of an English bullet across his brown cheek, stood bargaining for an embroidered scarf with a grave, dark-robed, high-cheeked Persian from Meshid.

A leper, holding out a fingerless hand with a whining petition for alms, was all but trampled on by a laden camel which came striding up the street, led by a half-clad Turcoman as lean and brown and shaggy as itself. The next moment a skinny Kashgarin, from beneath whose little saucer-shaped cap his huge bat-like ears stuck out a full inch on either side of his thin, narrow, *squeezed-looking* face, was rudely thrust aside by a ragged, wild-eyed dervish (religious devotee), who scowled at our heroes in passing, and muttered some polite remark about "Christian dogs."

Crossing three or four small water-courses which zigzagged among the rich level green fields outside the town, the boys at length reached the Hill of Burial. Baber's tomb sorely disappointed the enthusiastic Ernest, who could hardly believe that the two upright slabs of plain white marble could really be the sole memorial of a man whose name had shaken all Asia like a thunder-clap. But the surrounding view amply repaid him. From the summit of the hill (which was crowned with a small mosque of polished marble, inscribed, "Heaven eternal is the abode of Sultan Baber") he looked down upon a wide green plain more than twenty miles broad. Tiny streams wound their way along, and here and there the broad expanse was dotted with native forts and villages.

In the midst of all, outspread in the glory of the sunset, lay the great white city itself, with its endless panorama of flat-roofed houses, and shining domes, and tall tapering minarets, framed in a dark circle of leafy gardens. High above it, on a bold rocky bluff, loomed the huge gray wall of the citadel. Far to the north the snowy crests of the distant mountains glimmered faintly along the darkening sky, while on the west and south rose bare, stony heights. Little could the boys have imagined that, a few months later, upon these very heights, the best soldiers of Britain were to fight a four hours' battle for life and death against ten times their number of Afghans.

The hill itself—down the sloping side of which a little rivulet went dancing and sparkling to join the Cabool River below—was one mass of green herbage and brilliant flowers, amid which the white tombstones stood out every here and there. Beneath the overshadowing trees numerous groups of holiday-makers—some from the surrounding villages, others from Cabool itself—were already seated, puffing their long pipes, sipping coffee or sherbet, and enjoying the cool of the evening; and the gay-colored robes and turbans, glancing through the dark leaves or scattered over the grass, made the place look (as Tom Hilton remarked with a grin) "like Central Park on a Sunday afternoon."

"Except that there are no ladies here," suggested Ernest. "How is it that one never sees a woman in this part of the world? What do they do with themselves? Don't they ever go out to take the air or do any shopping like the women in our own country?"

"No, *they're* all locked up at home; and my cousin, Nellie Parsons, who's a missionary in the north of India, says they keep 'em just as close there as here. She'd all the work in the world awhile ago to get one of her Hindoo friends to let her take his wife for a drive, and even then he was so horrified at the whole proceeding he would only let her go in a close carriage."

So amused were our heroes with all they saw that they never noticed how fast the sun was sinking until it plunged out of sight behind the western hills.

"Hallo!" cried Ernest, starting to his feet; "hurry up, Tom, for we'll never find our way back in the dark."

"Never fear," replied Tom, confidently; "there's light enough left yet, if we step out lively."

But however lively they stepped out, darkness had fairly set in before they cleared the fields and water-courses, and found themselves in the town once more. Ernest, unused as yet to the ways of Eastern cities, was startled to find the streets, which had been so crowded and noisy barely two hours before, as lonely and silent as the grave. The very echo of their steps sounded unnaturally loud amid that ghostly stillness, and the narrow, tunnel-like streets, roofed in with matting every here and there, and almost buried between the high, gloomy, windowless houses, which in many places all but touched each other overhead, were so dark that at times our heroes had fairly to grope their way. Every winding of that gloomy maze seemed to breathe an atmosphere of treachery and midnight murder; and even Ernest's bold heart sank as he saw, by the gradual slackening of his comrade's brisk stride, and his hesitating glance around at every fresh turn, that Tom was as uncertain of their whereabouts as himself.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by a dull, muffled sound like the tramp of many feet, and the boys had barely time to draw back into the shadow of a deep archway, when there swept by them a seemingly endless train of armed men in Afghan dress, whose white turbans, and colored robes, and shining musket-barrels glimmered spectrally through the darkness.

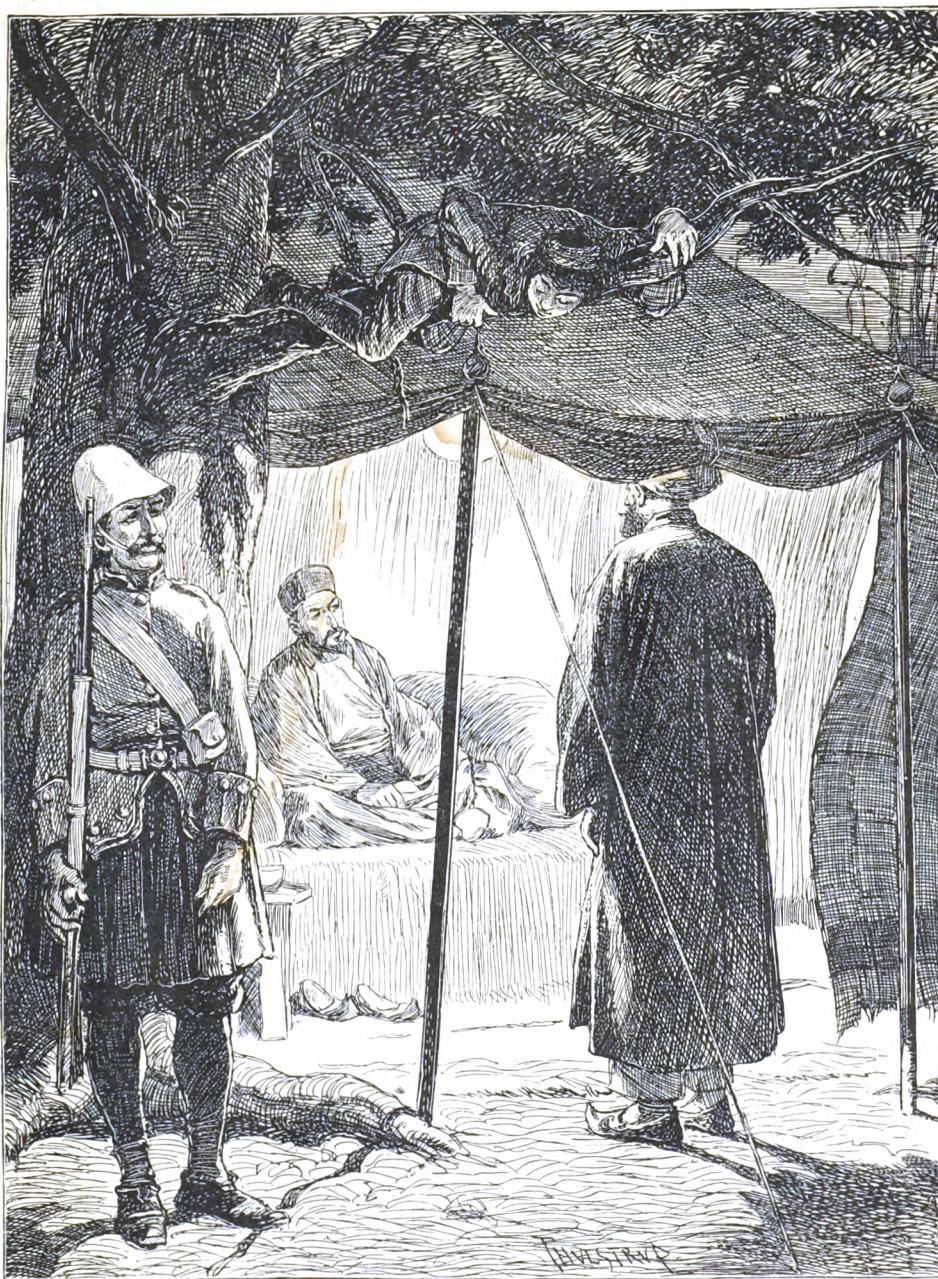
"There's mischief afoot, you bet," whispered Tom, as the last man disappeared. "Those are Afghan soldiers from Herat, and they wouldn't sneak in after dark this way if they weren't up to some mischief. Hallo! what's this? Hurrah! here's the garden wall of the British Residency, and we'll just go right in and get Major Cavagnari to give us a guide."

But they looked in vain along the high earthen wall for any sign of a gate. Finally, Tom, getting impatient, bade Ernest stand close to the wall, sealed it by means of his companion's shoulders, and then helped him in turn to the top, whence both dropped into the garden below.

"I say," whispered Ernest, "are you sure this is the Residency garden? I don't remember seeing these thick bushes before."

"Nor I," said Tom, "and it'll be a pretty job if we've got into some Afghan fellow's grounds by mistake. However, we are in the scrape now, and we can't turn back. At least, I don't mean to. We'll consider that we are on an exploring expedition, and we may find something worth looking at. Let's creep forward and see."

Worming their way cautiously through the bushes, they came suddenly upon a very unexpected scene. Beyond the thicket lay a wide space of open ground, flanked by a large white building of fantastic Eastern shape, at the door of which were dimly visible the tall figures and shining weapons of a group of native guards. In the centre of the clear space two Afghan soldiers were pacing up and down, with shouldered muskets, on either side of an open pavilion of crimson silk, lighted by two colored lamps. Both wore frayed red coats (evidently cast-off English uniforms), and copied zealously what they supposed to be the bearing of a British sentry, holding their



"HE FOUND HIMSELF RIGHT OVER THE TENT."

heads as stiff as a ramrod, and jerking their feet into the air at every step, as if kicking some invisible foe.

Within the pavilion a square, thickset fellow, with a frightfully scarred face, in the uniform of the Herat regiment which had just passed, was standing respectfully before a stout, broad-faced man in a rich dress of embroidered silk, who sat squatting on a pile of cushions.

"We're in the wrong box clearly," muttered Tom, "but I *must* hear what they're talking about, for I'm certain that there's some plot on hand against us foreigners, and that this Herat fellow and his men are at the bottom of it."

So saying, he threw himself flat on the ground, and keeping in the shadow, crawled forward to the foot of the tree that overshadowed the pavilion. Finding, however, that he could only catch a few words of the talk, he swung himself up into the branches, and crept out along a projecting limb. Before he knew it he found himself right over the tent. Ernest, who was watching him, felt his blood run cold as he saw the nearest sentinel turn sharply round, and bring his musket to the "ready." But just then a

large bird flapped away from the tree with a hoarse scream, and the Afghan, disarmed of his suspicions, resumed his measured walk.

Tom gained nothing by his venture, for at that moment the Herat officer bowed, and quitted the tent. But he was instantly replaced by a tall figure in the dress of a native priest, turning toward whom the seated man displayed the low slanting forehead, small narrow eyes, and thick black mustache of Yakoob Khan, the Ameer of Afghanistan.*

Starting back in amazement, Tom lost his balance, and fell down upon the tent with a tremendous crash, tearing the canopy right across, breaking one of the poles, and bringing down the nearest lamp with a rum. The soldiers sprang toward the spot, but just then a stone flung by Ernest knocked over the other lamp, and all was dark. As the boys darted into the thicket, they heard the shouting and stumbling of the guards mingling with the yells of the sentries, who were scuffling together on the ground, each taking the other for the author of the disturbance.

"Pity there are no newspapers here," said Ernest, as they regained the street, "to placard all the walls with, 'Mysterious Attack on the Ameer,' 'The Criminals still Undetected.' However, all's right now."

"All's wrong, you mean," answered Tom, gravely.

"Do you know who that man in the priest's dress was?"

"No; who was he?"

"*Kara Goorg, the Persian!*"

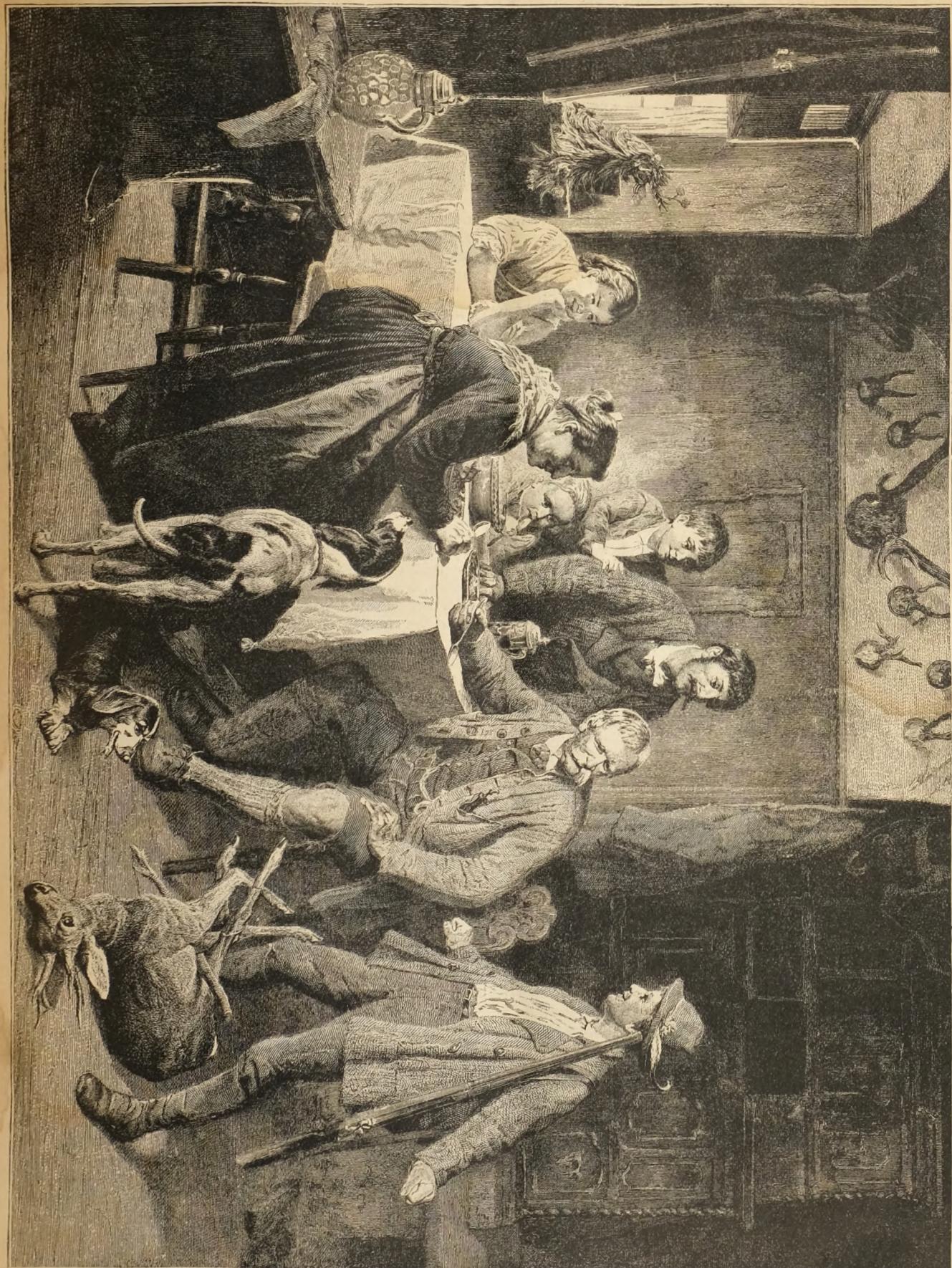
[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HIS FIRST ROEBUCK.

BY ARTHUR LINDSLEY.

OUR Heinrich will gladly guide you down through the wood to-morrow morning. It is too late to start this evening, even if Heinrich were here at this moment, and it may be night before he comes. He is away with his rifle, and has gone down in the very direction you will go to-morrow. This is his birthday—seventeen years old—and as he has never shot a roe, he determined to try his luck in hunting down toward Stromberg. The boy shoots well, and he won the prize last Christmas

* My impressions of the ex-Ameer are drawn chiefly from my late visit to his present residence at Dehra-Dhoon, in the Himalaya Mountains.—D. K.



from all the young men in the match at Rheinbölker. He started this morning," went on old Conrad, with a pleased smile, "the more eagerly because I told him that on my seventeenth birthday I shot my first roebuck."

I needed no second invitation. Old Conrad's honest face and bearing conveyed more of a welcome than even his words.

Presently our simple supper was ready for us, and we sat down to partake of it. Before we had finished it was fully dark. Gertrude, Conrad's niece, at last spoke of Heinrich as being late; but Conrad told her that his chance for a shot at a deer would not fairly come till after sunset.

He had scarcely made this explanation, however, before a step, like that of some one moving heavily, approached. The door was opened, and in stepped an athletic sturdy young fellow, who was greeted with a burst of welcome.

The new-comer had a rifle slung on his left shoulder, while on his right he carried a roebuck such as might gladden the heart of any hunter. It was a trophy of which he could well afford to be proud, even if it had not been the first he had ever shot, and even if Gertrude had not been there to witness his triumph. But with these two things added, I doubt if any general who had just won an important battle ever felt the dignity of his position more than did Heinrich when he walked up toward the table, and laid his load upon the floor.

Up to this moment he had not said a word. His face was glowing with pride and triumph, but amidst all the hubbub of voices his had not been heard. Then, in reply to his father's questions, he began, and, as he warmed up, we soon had the story told in hunter's earnest. With a foot on each side of the buck, his hands out, fists clinched, coat flying, he poured out the German gutturals thick and fast.

Heinrich had hunted more than half the distance through the wood toward Stromberg, but without success. Just before sunset he had returned to a thicket, within a mile of home, where he had found the tracks of roes in the morning. Hiding himself near the border of the thicket, he watched and waited, well knowing that it was the habit of those timid animals to come out and feed just at dusk. Sure enough, his knowledge and his patience were at length rewarded. As it was growing almost too dark to see the sights of his rifle, a buck and a doe showed themselves at the distance of about one hundred and fifty yards. Fearful that the darkness would soon render it impossible to shoot with fair aim, he took the chance, though they were so far from him. At the shot the doe leaped into the bushes and disappeared, while the splendid roebuck lay on the grass with a bullet through his brain—a shot of a thousand.

No wonder that young Heinrich was proud, and that his face shows it. Not a boy will read this without wishing that the shot had been his own. The next day as Heinrich and I went on our way down the Simmier he showed me the place, and I measured the distance; it was six yards further than he had stated it: a remarkable shot, truly.

Like almost all the species of deer, the roe is a very graceful and elegant animal. They are exclusively inhabitants of the Eastern Continent and islands. In Great Britain none live in England nor in the Lowlands of Scotland; in the Highlands, however, they are quite common.

On the continent of Europe they are found abundantly, and notwithstanding that they are very shy and timid, they remain where the country is thickly settled, as, for instance, in this very Bacharacher Wald, with old villages all about it. They are much smaller than any deer we have in America, a full-grown roebuck weighing only about sixty pounds.

A PICNIC WITH DEATH.

A STORY OF THE GREEK ISLANDS.*

THERE are not many places in Europe, or, indeed, in the whole world, more beautiful than the little islands which stud the sea between Greece and Asia Minor. From Scio and Lesbos down to rocky little Tenedos, they all seem just made on purpose for a holiday jaunt; and so, doubtless, thought the party of merry picnickers who came skimming over the smooth bright sea one fine May morning on their way from the isle of Syra to a small, low-lying islet a few miles beyond it.

"Well, I call that quite a lovely place," cried one of the girls, as the green slopes and broad white sands of the smaller island, dotted here and there with dark clumps of trees, came full into view. "I wonder the folks here should give it such a bad name."

"There's a story they tell about it," said her brother, "how some old chief lived here once who had made his son clear out because he'd done something awfully mean; and one night the son came back with a lot of pirates, and killed his father, and burned up the whole place; and ever since then nobody will live on it at any price."

"They do seem shy of it, that's a fact," added another. "I had quite a job to make our old Greek fellow yonder" (pointing to the sallow, wiry, gray-haired fisherman in the bows) "bring us over here at all; and when he saw the lunch baskets put in he muttered something which they told me meant, 'He who feasts *there* shall have Death for his guest.'"

Beyond all doubt old Stephanos, the fisherman, was anything but pleased with his job, even though it was the best day's work that he had done that year. His brown, wizened face seemed to grow gloomier as the islet drew nearer; and when the boat at length ran right up on to the smooth sand, nothing could persuade him to go any farther upon the "evil ground." He curled himself snugly up in the bottom of the boat, and prepared to sleep until the party came back.

But the joyous holiday-makers troubled themselves little about Stephanos or his fears, dismissing both with a hearty laugh. The lunch baskets were soon landed, and their first idea was to have their meal on the shore, and then explore the island. But finding no convenient spot along the beach, they decided (little dreaming how important that decision would be to them all) to ascend the ridge above, and carry their lunch along with them.

A snug place was soon found under the lee of a huge rock, which completely sheltered them from the sun; and there, with the cool sea-breeze playing around them, and the little island outspread below them in the midst of the clear, bright waters, they enjoyed themselves to the utmost.

But the fresh breeze died away little by little, and a hot, close, lifeless heaviness settled down upon the lonely sea.

"Isn't it terribly hot?" cried a girl, disconsolately. "I thought it was going to be quite nice, and now it's as bad as Broadway in August."

"It'll be cool enough before long, I guess," said the leader of the party, who had scrambled up on to the rock overhead. "There's a big cloud coming along over yonder, and a rain-cloud at that."

Every one rose to look, and a burst of admiring exclamations broke forth: "How grand!" "Doesn't it come on quickly?" "It doesn't seem to spread at all, though." "Is it a cloud, after all?" "Why, what else can it be?"

The careless question was suddenly and terribly answered. As the picnickers looked down, with a feeling of wonder which was just beginning to be mingled with a vague uneasiness, upon the long dark gray band that was sweeping over the smooth sea, they saw it reach a lonely

* This story is perfectly true, and I lately passed the island on which the catastrophe occurred, in the course of a voyage to Egypt.—AUTHOR.

rock that stood gauntly up out of the blue sun-lit waters several miles to the northwest.

As they passed it in their boat that morning they had looked up and seen that rock towering full fifty feet overhead; but now, as the advancing shadow reached it, it vanished at once beneath a mountain of foaming water that leaped up into the air more than a hundred feet.

"It's a *wave!*" screamed their leader, springing back. "Run! run!"

The warning was hardly needed. Almost before he could utter it the whole party were running helter-skelter toward the top of the ridge.

But quickly as they fled they were only just in time. Hardly had the last one been dragged up by the rest on to the steep tower-shaped rock that crowned the slope when there came a shock and a crash as if the very earth were torn asunder. In a moment the whole island had disappeared, and all around them up to the very foot of the rock was one roaring whirlpool of boiling foam and lashing spray.

The wave itself went by them like the rush of a waterfall, but such a mighty mass of water could not sweep over the sea without shaking it far and wide. Following upon the great wave came a long train of lesser billows, roaring and foaming and lashing on every side, and more than two hours passed before they could venture to descend from their place of refuge.

When they did come down at last, they found themselves in the midst of a scene of desolation which no words can describe. By one stroke the beautiful little fairy islet had been changed into a hideous desert. Trees were torn up by the roots, or twisted round like straws. Stones and gravel lay heaped in uneven ridges, between which lay deep pools of salt-water. Huge boulders, hurled from their place, stood gauntly up amid the dismal waste of bare wet sand that overspread all the once green and sunny uplands, and the sea was rolling fathom-deep over the spot where their boat had lain high upon the beach only a few hours before.

To look for any place of encampment amid such a chaos was simply hopeless. Shivering with cold and terror, the forlorn party crept back to their sheltering rock. There, with the waters surging about them like a dull funeral wail, they cowered all through the long, dreary night.

The next morning our castaways were luckily seen by a passing steamer, which sent a boat to take them off. Nothing more was ever heard of their own boat, or of poor old Stephanos, whose superstitious fears had brought down destruction upon him by the very means which he took to avoid it; and although the excursionists remained some time longer in Greek waters, their first island picnic was also their last.

EARTH-WORMS.

BY SARAH COOPER.

NOW, my dear young friends, let us go out and dig for earth-worms. They are very disagreeable creatures, you will say, and we do not like to have anything to do with them. It is very true. Few people care for earth-worms, except the boys who like to use them for bait. But instead of torturing them on fish-hooks, we will make friends with the despised worms, and learn that none of these lowly creatures are too humble to perform their part in Nature's plan.

Who would have thought the little earth-worm had any work to do, or was of any further use in the world than to bait fish-hooks? Yet so it is, and we are now told that the present fertile condition of the earth is largely due to earth-worms.

Then we must take another look at these industrious workers. Having selected a fine large specimen, we will

put it on a plate or on a piece of white paper, where it will show to advantage. The worm will of course creep to the edge and try to hide from sight. Some of you may shrink from touching the cold, damp worm to lift it back on the plate, so with your pencil you may change its direction, even though you can not persuade it to stay where it is placed.

Notice, please, that this is the first animal we have examined which lives upon land. The simplest forms of life occur in water, but from this point in our studies we shall sometimes come ashore for specimens, and the boys and girls all over the country will have an equal chance to obtain them. Even those who live in large cities can procure earth-worms.

Let us study for a moment the illustration of an earth-worm that we have here. The worm itself is shown at *a*: *b* is a small part of it magnified so as to show the bristles pointing backward. The egg of the worm, *c*, is curiously constructed, having a valve at one end. In *d* we see the young worm, which has opened the valve, and is coming out.

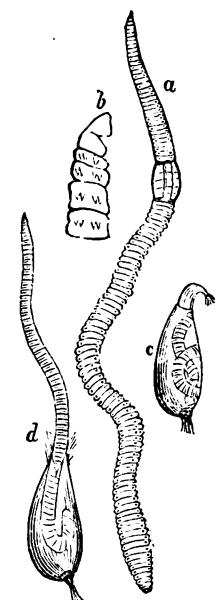
The body of the worm tapers toward each end, so that we can scarcely tell the head from the tail unless we watch the direction in which it creeps. Notice all those little rings across the body, and see how they slip in and out of each other as the worm moves. These rings can be drawn so close together that a large worm will sometimes make itself very short. Does this creature look like a radiate? I am sure you will think not, and we will learn now that all animals which have the body made up of rings or segments extending crosswise belong to another class.

The earth-worm contains from one hundred to two hundred of these rings, each of which is furnished with four pair of bristles pointing backward. You can easily feel them with your fingers. The bristles assist in crawling, and prevent the worm from slipping back as the rings are contracted and expanded. Still the worm can creep backward when it desires to, and many of you may have noticed how rapidly these timid animals draw back into their holes.

Earth-worms have no distinct head or eyes. The mouth consists of two lips, and it has neither teeth nor tentacles. The semi-transparent body will enable you to see the food canal, extending from the mouth through the whole length of the worm, and enlarged in two places to form the crop and gizzard. Grains of sand and small stones are often found within the strong gizzard, where they probably act as millstones in helping to grind the food. Birds, we know, are in the habit of swallowing stones for the same purpose.

We find no heart in these lowly creatures, but in its place a set of blood-vessels, which contract in such a way as to force the blood from the tail to the head. It is supposed that earth-worms breathe by tubes opening upon the external surface of their bodies. Each one of the rings is supplied with a pair of nervous ganglia. By the word ganglia is meant a centre of nerves; it consists of a mass of nerve cells sending out nerve fibres to other parts of the body.

Worms live in burrows in the ground, and in making them they swallow an astonishing amount of earth, out of which they take all the nourishing matter. They do not confine themselves, however, to this coarse diet, but they feed upon leaves and stems, from the edges of which they



suck off little bits, having first drawn them into their burrows for a distance of two or three inches. Leaves are also dragged in for plugging their burrows. When they can not get leaves for this purpose they sometimes pile up heaps of stone to close the entrance. This work is all done during the night.

The burrows are often lined with a layer of fine earth, which seems not only to strengthen the walls, but to form a smooth surface for the worm's body. At the bottom of the burrow there is generally an enlarged chamber which contains small stones, and here the worms pass the winter rolled up two or three together in a ball.

Now if we want to know what becomes of the earth which is swallowed by worms, we have but to remember the rounded, worm-like heaps of earth called "castings," which are so thick among the grass, and on the untrodden parts of paths and drives, or in the flower-pots when a few worms have been dug up with our favorite house plants. When a worm comes to the surface to empty its body it backs out of its hole, and the earth is ejected in spurts, first on one side, then on the other, until it forms a little heap, which hardens in drying. It is estimated that the quantity of fine earth thus carried to the surface in the course of a year would in many places form a layer one-fifth of an inch in thickness, amounting to a weight of more than ten tons on each acre.

Have you ever noticed the layers of different-colored

earth that are exposed in digging a well or a cellar? The upper layer, you may remember, is mostly of a rich dark color. It consists of fine soil two or three inches deep, which has been sifted of stones and coarse materials, and is spoken of as "vegetable mould." This fertile layer is the work of earth-worms.

Charles Darwin estimated that the whole mass of vegetable mould which is spread over the surface of the earth passes through the bodies of worms once every four years, in this way exposing fresh masses of earth to the influence of rain and wind. Worms also do much to enrich the soil by the great number of leaves and twigs drawn into their burrows.

"The bones of dead animals, the harder parts of insects, the shells of land mollusks, leaves, twigs, etc., are before long all buried beneath the castings of worms, and are thus brought

in a more or less decayed state within reach of the roots of plants."

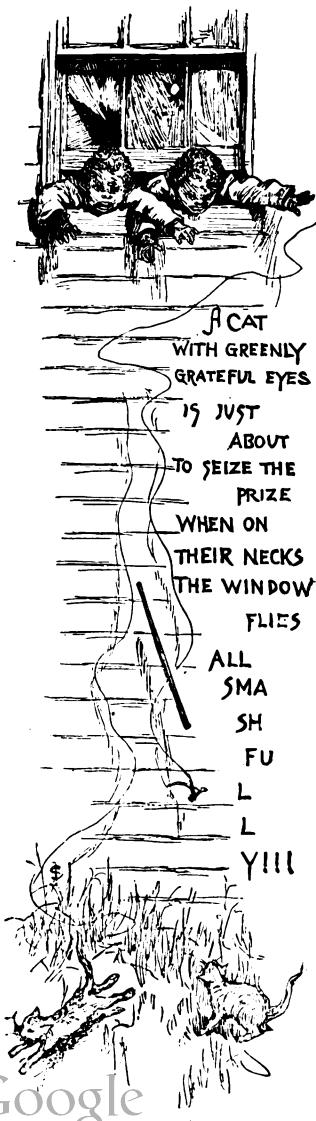
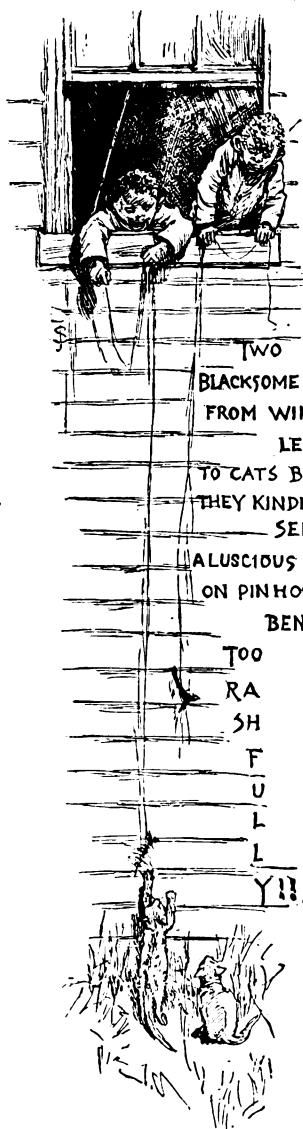
"The plough is one of the most ancient and most valuable of man's inventions; but long before he existed the land was in fact regularly ploughed, and still continues to be thus ploughed, by earth-worms. It may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world as have these lowly organized creatures." The corals indeed have done more conspicuous work in constructing great reefs and islands, but these are mostly confined to the tropical zones.

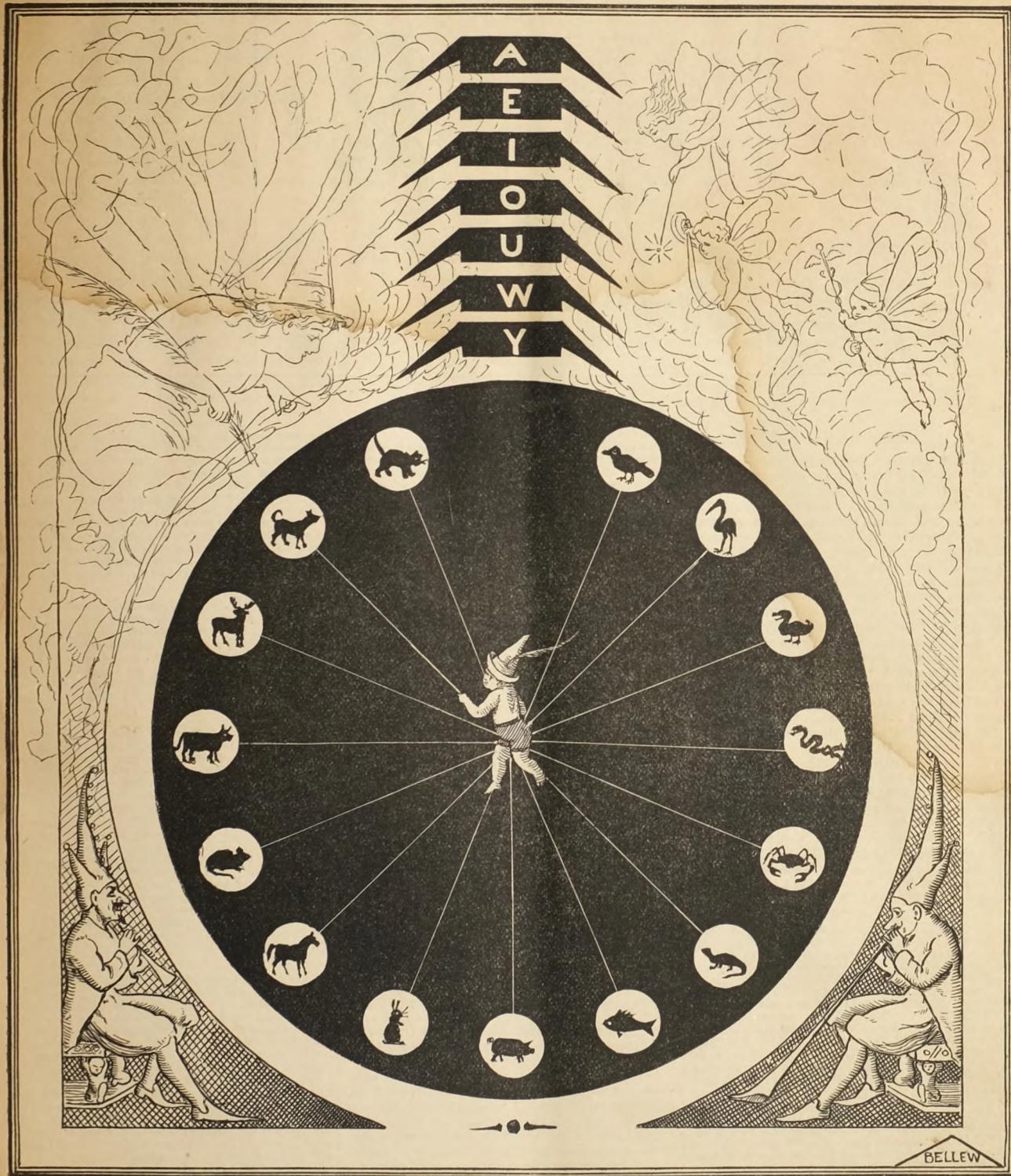
It is no new discovery that pebbles and cinders and even large stones lying on the ground will in a few years disappear. Neglected and unused pavements will also be covered with soil which supports a growth of grass and weeds. These every-day wonders escape the attention of most of us, but Charles Darwin, while pursuing his studies and observations upon various subjects, still found time to notice the worms. He and his sons watched them for more than thirty-five years before he published the book which gives these interesting facts.

He says that worms often lie motionless for hours just beneath the mouth of their burrows, so that by looking closely their heads may be seen. If the earth or rubbish over the burrow be suddenly removed, the worm retreats rapidly. This habit of lying near the surface leads to great destruction. At certain seasons of the year the thrushes and blackbirds draw out of their holes an astonishing number. Watch the robins some morning hopping over the lawn, and see how they peck and peck at some object, finally bracing themselves upon their tails, and pulling with all their might, as if determined to draw the victim out this time; but the worm holds on so tightly by its short bristles that it is no easy matter.

Earth-worms exist all over the world, in cold countries as well as in warm ones, and even in small islands far out in the ocean. They require some moisture, and during very dry weather, or when the ground is frozen, they retire to a considerable depth.

Large quantities of worms are often found dead on the pavements after a heavy rain. As earth-worms like moisture, it is scarcely probable these have been drowned. Darwin suggests that they were already sick, and the flood may only have hastened their death.





THE WIZARD'S FRYING-PAN.

BY FRANK BELLEW.

THIS is not a game, neither is it exactly a puzzle, but a wonderful trick.

The Wizard, who must understand the game, will allow any one to count on the frying-pan any number he pleases; and without his letting the Wizard or any one else know the number he has counted, the Wizard will tell him where he stops.

This is the way you do: You think of a number in your mind; we will suppose it to be nine. Now you commence to count, starting with any vowel you please on the handle of the frying-pan. We will say you start at O. Well, O is one, U is two, W is three, Y is four; now you come to the magic circle, and you continue counting on the white buttons either to the right or left, whichever you please. We will suppose you continue to count on the left side. You have already counted up to four. Well,

the cat makes five, the dog six, the deer seven, the cow eight, the rat nine; here you stop. Now you begin to count nine back again, but this time you do not go on to the handle, but stick to the magic circle, thus: the rat counts one, the cow two, the deer three, the dog four, the cat five, the crow six, the crane seven, the duck eight, and the snake nine, and that is your stopping-place.

Now think of any number you please, from seven to seven hundred, and count in this way, and the Wizard will tell you every time exactly where you stop. All you have to do is to tell the Wizard from which vowel on the handle you start, and which way you turn, whether by the cat-and-dog, or left side, or by the crow-and-crane, or right side.

Now for the benefit of the Wizard, who alone must take a peep, we give a full explanation of this wonderful game in the Post-office Box. Let one of your number, whom you have chosen as Wizard, look there. The rest of you must remain in ignorance, so that you can enjoy the game.



THE FOUR SEASONS.

OUR POST-OFFICE BOX.

THERE is always something pleasant about a beginning. Who does not enjoy beginning a new book, or setting the first stitch in a dainty piece of embroidery, or trying a new ball or a shining pair of skates, or building a new boat? We begin everything with enthusiasm. The trouble is that often we lose our interest as we go on, and do not finish our work as neatly and beautifully as we began it. Nobody need have the slightest fear, however, that the new volume of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, which starts on its career with this brilliant number, will in any way be a disappointment. On the contrary, Volume V. will be full of good things through all the rolling year. Just think, children: there is, presto! the Thanksgiving number coming, and it will have the most delightful stories and pictures; then the holiday numbers, of which the Christmas number will be simply enchanting.

Did a little hand twitch my dress just then, and did I hear a little girl say, "Please, Postmistress, let me see if my letter is printed this week?" I know you all want to look at the letters, so I'll say no more about Volume V. of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, except that I am very sorry for the young people who do not receive it, and I wish very much that every boy and girl in the Union, and Canada, and in all places where the dear English language is spoken, could share with us in the pleasures it brings.

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS.

I have never seen a letter from this place yet, and so I write one, hoping you will like it well enough to put it in the Post-office Box. I am one of your boy readers, and am ten years old. I have not been going to school for over a year, and I will tell you why. One day while I was at school I fell down and hurt my knee. It pained me a great deal, and when I went home that night I told mamma; but mamma thought I had just hurt myself a little, and rubbed the place that night. The next day I hurt again, so papa sent for the doctor, who said I must stay in bed. I was in bed here for four weeks, and then, as my leg got no better, papa and mamma took me to San Antonio to see the celebrated Dr. H. He cured me in about two months, but told us to be very careful with the leg. We did not go home right away, but staid awhile in San Antonio, which is a very pretty city, and has many pretty places of amusement. After we came home papa did not send me to school, as he was afraid that I would hurt my leg again. But it is perfectly well now, and I think I will go to school again on the 1st of next month. I received YOUNG PEOPLE as a birthday present, and like it very much, especially the Post-office Box. I fear I am making my letter too long, so I will close. With much love to you, I am

JOSEPH H.

You had a very serious time with your knee. I am glad you are not now in danger of being lame. Now we will read your sister's letter:

I do not myself take the paper, but enjoy reading my little brother's, and am particularly interested in the Post-office Box. It is so pleasant to read letters from boys and girls in all parts of the Union and Europe, especially when they give descriptions of cities, public buildings, and scenery. I wish I could tell you something interesting about Corpus, but it is a small place of only four or five thousand inhabitants, and is neither pretty nor lively. Still, being on the coast, the

climate is delightful, and the sea-bathing fine, and all that is needed to make Corpus a pleasant summer resort is a fine hotel, which I hope will be built at some future time. The population of Corpus is composed partly of Mexicans, of whom I feel sure you would like to hear something. They are a dirty class of people, live in very small wooden houses, and sleep on blankets (the same in which they wrap themselves during the day). Their principal articles of food are "tortillas," or corn cakes, and beans. During the fruit season they live largely on water-melons. The lower class of Mexicans are never seen without shawls over their heads, even in midsummer. The women are noted for their beautiful blue-black hair and fine eyes.

I hope you will not find this letter too long to place among the number which help to make the Post-office Box so bright and attractive. Sending much love to all readers of the paper.

I am your true friend, HATTIE H.

TITUSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA.

I have taken your lovely paper for almost a year, as my time will be up next Christmas, but I expect to take it next year. I go to school, and am in next to the highest grade. There are quite a number of girls about my age whom I go with, and every night since the leaves have begun to fall we have had a bonfire. Once in a while we get one of our papas to put oil on the leaves, and the oil makes a grand blaze.

Has the Postmistress, or have any of the little readers, ever seen the McGibney family, which is a family of fourteen, twelve children and the parents. Every one, away down to the little boy only two years old, is a musician. One of the little girls, about my age, plays the violin, cornet, piano, and drum. I have only one pet—a canary named Fritz. I have a doll named Susie, but as I am in my teens I do not care so much for her. I have only one sister, Lillie, who is eleven years old.

MAUD A.

I have never seen the remarkable family to whom you allude, but when I was a child I was taken to see and hear the Hutchinsons, as very likely your mamma was. I remember how charming I thought their songs, and how deeply I fell in love with Miss Abby.

Although you may not yourself care to play with your doll, you may lend her to little visitors who come to see you. I wouldn't like some people to know it, but I have a charming French doll at my house, which my little girl has outgrown. It has a trunk, and a bureau, and a quantity of pretty clothes, and whenever a wee guest happens in, we bring "Belle" out for her entertainment. Then you should hear the delighted "O-oh!" which greets our pretty dolly.

The three letters which follow are very good specimens of the Indian-summer letters which the Postmistress asked her correspondents to write. Several others will appear next week.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

The story which is below is not true, only what I made up.

One fine day, when the sunshine seemed to be everywhere, we all went to the woods to gather chestnuts. As we came along eating apples which our mothers had given us, I came across a suniac bush which was so straight that I cut it down for a vaulting-pole. Soon we came to the woods, where we began picking up with willing hands the nuts which Jack Frost had kindly put within our reach. Pretty soon one of the girls found a beautiful ivy growing up against a tree, and as

she was about to pick it, I told her not to be so reckless, as it might be a poisonous ivy, which is found in a good many woods. When I said this, she pouted and looked very cross. But dropping down on my knees, I found that it was not poisonous, which made her quite cheerful again, as she wanted to take it home and plant it.

When our bags were full we searched for mosses and ferns, and when we started for home we were so heavily loaded that a kind old farmer gave us a ride in his hay wagon, and we climbed in and played jokes on each other all the way home.

PERCY F.

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA.

Instead of going to school last week we were quite willing to come up near the mountains to see Aunt Eliza, who is a mother to everybody. She was standing in the ivy-covered porch, ready to welcome us. Benny, the little colored boy, ran out for the satchels. Maum Susan gave us a huging, and Maum Ellen hurried out of the kitchen to say, "Why, honeys, how you's growed since last year!"

We are having a glorious time. The sunshine is bright and cheerful, but not hot, so we can be out all day; the woods are beautiful with goldenrod, suniac, and field daisies; the trees are turning all colors, chestnuts and chinapins dropping, and persimmons getting ripe. We are gathering lots of nuts to carry home, with red apples for Freddie. We race down hills and tumble over fences in the most reckless manner. Maum Susan at our heels. We are seeing how the cotton grows, and learning all the nut trees. When we go home and stand in school with freckles down our noses, and our teacher asks a question, suppose we say, "Chinapins and chestnuts, hickory-nuts and walnuts; the only lesson we know, ma'am, is about the squirrels and the partridges, autumn leaves and blue jays," what do you think she'll do to us?

NONIE AND CARRIE.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

I am a little boy eight years old. I go to school and study a good deal. The other day, as I was walking with my mother, I saw some suniac which was very pretty. I raise a good many flowers, and this summer papa carried them to the depot, as I was not willing to leave them behind; they were very heavy, and papa carried them in a very reckless way. We were going to west Chester to spend the summer, and when we got there they were drooping for want of water. We had a nice big yard, with a lawn which had a chestnut-tree in it. I planted them there. Everybody is very cheerful out there, as it is a very nice place. I went into an apple orchard, and got lots of apples. There is always a lot of sun in that yard. We have come home now, and I am raising a slip of ivy. Good-bye.

LAWRASON R. L.

ONKEDA, NEW YORK.

I have a parrot, and she says a great many things. I can put my finger into her cage, and she will not offer to bite me, but papa and mamma can do nothing with her. She laughs, sings, and cries. I have a pet cat named Tizer, and every morning, when mamma lets him into the house, he comes right upstairs and jumps on my bed and wakes me up; then he tries to lift up the bedclothes so as to get inside and go to sleep in my arms; and if I do not pay attention to him, he rubs his nose against my face, and coaxes me to take him. I have no brothers nor sisters, and so I find it very lonely, not having any one to play with. I have taken YOUNG PEOPLE over three years, and I like it very much; I look forward to it every week. I must tell you something that I never heard of before at this time of year. We have a large blackberry-bush in our garden, and the berries that are on it are the largest I ever saw. The other day I went out in

the garden, and looking at the bush, saw there were a great number of berries on it. I picked them all. I showed them to papa, and he was surprised. There are some on there now. I wish I could get an alligator's tooth and some sea-beans. I went to Cape May this summer, and had a lovely time. My papa is a dentist. He had the rheumatism, and had to go there for his health. I had a beautiful pigeon once, but it flew away, and never came back again. I think "Dick and D." is a lovely story. GRACIE L. SMITH.

Perhaps somebody will send Gracie an alligator's tooth and the sea-beans she wishes for, and I am sure Gracie will find a card or curiosity to send in return.

LOUISVILLE, OHIO.

The town of Louisville, which I live in, is a village of about 1500 inhabitants. Most of the people around here are French or of French descent. My papa keeps a dry-goods store and groceries. He can speak French, English, and Dutch. I have five sisters and one brother. Estella is the pet; she is over two years old. My dear mamma died last July, and I am very lonely without her.

I am twelve years old, and have had asthma since I was about four years old. When I am sick, and have to stay at home from school, I like to pass a way the time by reading HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, and sometimes I paint. My uncle gave me the paper for a Christmas gift, and I like it better than all my other Christmas gifts, because I get something new to read every week.

We have a piano; my oldest sister takes lessons, and as soon as I learn the notes my papa says he will get me a violin. Which do you think sounds the sweetest, a violin or a guitar?

CHARLES F.

I prefer a violin. I know that a lad must be lonely without a mother to go to, but I think yours is a loving home, and am sure you all do what pleased your mamma when she was with you.

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

We are two cousins, and live in this city, and as the Grand Southern Exposition is going on we thought we would write and tell you about it. It is very large, covering four blocks. The music is very fine, but we enjoy the art gallery most. The art gallery is a separate building from the Exposition; there are four rooms containing pictures. At night the Exposition is lit up by electric lights. There are little stands where you can get a cup of coffee or a glass of iced tea free, and either is very refreshing after walking about. There is a grand organ there; it is said to be the largest in the United States. Every Friday night there is, besides the organ and the musicians, a chorus of a hundred voices. Every Thursday night there are beautiful fire-works.

OLIVIA S. and KATHERINE H.

ECHARLEE, GEORGIA.

I do wish, dear Postmistress, you were in our beautiful Southern land, everything looks so pretty; we have not had frost yet. I have never written to you before, but I see my cousin has, for I read her letter lately in the Post-office Box. I am eight years old. My brothers and I have pets, but not a baby pet like my cousin; ours are dogs, cats, and pigeons. We are to move to a new home soon, and can not take them all with us; we will only take the puppy Pluto and the pigeons. Mamma says we will find pets where we are going. We move about twenty-three miles from here. My little brother Johnnie (who is six years old) and I have such nice tea parties; a dear lady in New York sent me a beautiful china tea set. I take so much pleasure reading the little "Housekeepers" recipes. Mamma says I may try some of them when we have moved. I have made "one-egg cake," and it must have been good, for we ate it all up. I hope my letter is not too long.

MARIE ESTELLE C.

BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS.

May I be one of the group around the Postmistress? I live in Galveston, but my old home is in Brownsville. Mamma and I have come to visit our old home, which is situated on the Rio Grande River, opposite Matamoras, Mexico. There are a great many Mexicans here. I have no brothers or sisters, but I have two very pretty pets. One is a Spanish canary; it came from Monterey, and is not much larger than a humming-bird; its color is black and yellow, and its name is Tomtit. It sings sweetly, but not loudly. My other pet is a horse; his name is Prince, and he is very fond of sugar. He is very playful, and is a great pet with everybody who knows him. I have been taking YOUNG PEOPLE for a year, and have enjoyed reading the stories in it very much, especially "Raising the Pearl." EDITH B. F.

OWNSBOROUGH, KENTUCKY.

I would like to know whether any other little girl who takes this paper has ever had as nice birthday presents as I have. I had a little sister when I was four years old, and one when I was eight, so our birthday is the same day—the 11th of September. Mamma gave us a surprise party

in the yard under the trees. We were going to have our pictures taken together, but Arree (she is the smallest; she is four) cut her bangs zigzag, I love to ride on horseback. I received YOUNG PEOPLE and *St. Nicholas* for a Christmas gift. I have ten dolls. My pony was struck by lightning and killed. I do hope Nan will come back soon. Good-by. SUE G.

It was a great pity about the bangs, but you must have the pictures taken when they grow straight.

VERADO, CUBA.

My papa took YOUNG PEOPLE for my sister, but now as I am seven years of age, and I like reading, papa takes it for me. I am a little Cuban boy, and the few stories I have read I like very much. I have been in New York, and I like that city. Here where we live it is very pretty, and quite near the sea. We have hills here, and we can see the ocean and the vessels that come from Mexico. The next time I will tell you about my pets and about Cuba.

ANTONIO G.

PORTRIDGE, MAINE.

I am very much pleased with "Dick and D.," and hope that it will not end soon. By my last exchange I obtained a few stamps which I did not have; I completed my set of interior departmentals, and through you, for which I thank you very much.

W. W. J.

PORT HURON, MICHIGAN.

I wrote to you once before, but my letter was not printed; but you told me to write again, so I thought I would. My younger brother Willie is very cute and cunning now; he is almost two years old, and his initials are the same as those of General Sherman. I am ten years old, and I study arithmetic, grammar, reading, geography, spelling, and writing. I send these verses, which papa and I composed about Willie:

Willie, boy, baby boy, where has Willie been? He has been a-riding out upon the green, In his cloak of azure and his snow-white hood. When he goes a-riding he is very good.

Willie, boy, baby boy, what did Willie see When he went a-riding out along with me? Many things, pretty things, new to baby eyes, Gazing all around us, filled with sweet surprise.

Willie, boy, baby boy, little brother mine, Whose soft arms so fondly round my neck entwine.

And against my cheek presses many a pretty kiss!

Ne'er a sweeter baby can be found than this.

Baby ways so winning, cheeks of rosy hue, Dimpled chin and golden hair, eyes of darkest blue—

Oh! we love him dearly, baby Willie boy, And his merry laughter fills the house with joy.

I also send you a picture of Willie with his cloak and hood on. Love to the Postmistress.

EDITH E. S.

The lines are very pretty indeed, and still prettier is the photograph of the darling boy, which stands on my desk as I write. No wonder you are proud of the fine little fellow.

VALLEJO, CALIFORNIA.

I have not taken YOUNG PEOPLE very long, but I think it is lovely. I think "Dick and D." is splendid. I am anxious for Tuesday to come. I am ten years old; my sister is twelve. For a pet I have a parrot; he is the sweetest little thing you ever saw.

MABEL B.

NOVA SPRINGS, IOWA.

I'm only eleven, but I have fun. I have a kitten, Madge has a dog, and we have lots of horses and a beautiful black pony. Papa has a farm, and we enjoy going out. Sometimes we swing in the big barn, with hay (and if anything is fragrantly delightful it's new-mown hay) all around us. I mean to have a farm of my own when I'm older, if I am a girl. I don't see why not, do you? I can make nice butter now. Mamma gave me a cunning churn Christmas, and when I feel like it, in goes the cream and splash! goes the dasher, and soon I have a little yellow roll. Did you ever try it? When I visit my friend Stella I play with the lambs, and they are so cunning.

We have an old mare named Curly, which is twenty-six years old. She is very gentle, and loves dry bread.

I don't approve of Jimmy Brown. What does make him so trying? We all welcome HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE. Mamma takes it for me.

HAN LONGSTREET B.

You can do more than the Postmistress, dear. If she never made a pound of butter in her life. If she had your churn and your cream she would probably try them together.

BRIDGEWATER, MASSACHUSETTS.

I am a little boy seven years old. My uncle Henry has had YOUNG PEOPLE sent me for two years. I like the letters in the Post-office Box so

much, I thought I would write one about my visit to Vermont. My uncle, aunt, and two cousins live on a farm near the Connecticut River. I had great fun wading near the bank and digging fresh-water clams. There was a lovely brook, where I caught a number of trout; but the best fun was wading in it and building dams across it; when they broke away we called it a flood. My cousins had a young squirrel that was quite tame, and my sister Alice brought it home with her; she likes it better than a kitty, because it likes to get in her pocket, or on the back of her neck under her hair. When I am a little older, I think mamma will let me spend all of my vacation with auntie. I like to be on a farm so much, they have so many horses, cows, sheep, and all kinds of farm machinery.

ALBERT C. B.

A number of excellent receipts will be given the Little Housekeepers in the next number. Among them will be one from a favorite author, a lady who writes very lovely things for YOUNG PEOPLE. She has been kind enough to tell us her way of making bread, and the Little Housekeepers who may try it will find the bread good, if they shall follow the directions. Next week, remember, the little cooks are to have their turn, so get the rolling-pins ready, please, and the wooden spoons, and the wire sieves, and the big kitchen aprons, and little cooking-caps.

KEY TO THE WIZARD'S FRYING-PAN.

We will assume that you are acting the part of the Wizard, and the person to whom you are exhibiting commences at O, and continues to count on the cat-and-dog side. Then, no matter how many he counts, he will stop at the fourth button on the crow-and-crane side.

If he starts at A (that being the seventh letter on the handle), and continues to count along the cat-and-dog side, then he will stop at the seventh button on the crow-and-crane side.

All the Wizard has to do is to count the number of the letter (beginning at Y) from which the person consulting the oracle starts, and then count the same number on the buttons in the circle in the opposite direction to which he counted, and that will be the place at which he will stop.

The letters on the handle represent the following numbers: Y=1, W=2, U=3, O=4, I=5, E=6, A=7.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

TWO ENIGMAS.

1. My first is in lap, not in drink. My second is in beaver, not in mink. My third is in Charles, not in George. My fourth is in canyon, not in gorge. My fifth is in lake, not in ocean. My sixth is in wheeler, not in Goshen. My seventh is in movement, not in motion. My whole is the name of a celebrated priest.

2. My first is in bottle, not in jug. My second is in tumbler, not in mug. My third is in year, not in week. My fourth is in search, not in seek. My fifth is in tent, not in cave. My sixth is in transom, not in nave. My whole is the name of an honored poet well known to fame.

No. 2.

GEOGRAPHICAL PUZZLE.

Three friends (city on Vancouver's Island, sound in arctic archipelago, and city of Arkansas) went out to spend a day in the woods. They were joined by a mischievous little friend named Oliver (in Oregon), and the four went merrily on together. But this did not last long. The (sound in arctic archipelago) threw some (city of French Guiana) (city of Vancouver's) fine (city of Italy) hat. She was filled with (cape of Scotland). A beautiful (river in Montana) was offered her, and also some (city in France), but to no purpose, as the day was spoiled.

EMMIE W.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN No. 207.

No. 1.—Lily. Newspaper.

No. 2.—A ugusta.

U tica.

S pringfield.

T uscaloosa.

R eading.

A nnapolis.

L onisville.

I ndianapolis.

A teheson.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from Anna Murray, Georgie Pease, Maurice Denison, Prescott Young, Arthur Cecil Perry, Jun., Clara K. C. Date, Mabel Florence S., Frances H., Little Fidget, Laura Brunner, Gazette, Emmie W.

[For Exchanges, see 2d and 3d pages of cover.]



QUEEN OF THE GAY NORTHERN LIGHTS.

BRISK AND HER MASTER.

THE question is often asked, "Do dogs understand what is said?" and to this every one will reply, "To a certain extent they do, as is shown by their obedience to their master's commands."

"He can do everything but talk," is a not uncommon remark of a dog lover, as he pats the shaggy head of his four-footed friend and companion.

Still, no one will assert that dogs understand an ordinary conversation, though they undoubtedly often listen attentively, when they are fond of the speakers, and obtain bits of information from detached words.

More than this, they obey signs in a stealthy fashion, and move as if they were treading on eggs, thus showing that they look upon a signal as an injunction to secrecy, and act accordingly.

In proof of this I will instance the doings of an English terrier of my acquaintance. Brisk has been unfortunate enough to offend her master. Being in want of something to do, she gnawed the leg of a handsome chair, and was chased out of the dining-room in consequence.

Having been accustomed to spend a good deal of her time on the hearth-rug, she objects to this banishment, and as she is tolerated there when the master is absent, she is always on the lookout for his departure in the morning.

She will peep in at the dining-room door and look at her mistress, as if to ask, "Is he gone yet?"

Without speaking, the lady will lift up her husband's hat or umbrella, or point to the out-door boots by the fender, when Brisk slinks off again, knowing that if these articles are in sight, the master has not taken his departure yet. As soon as the hall door closes Brisk prances in, tail erect, and, manifesting her delight in every possible way, she takes up her favorite position.

But let her mistress rise and place her husband's slippers within the fender, Brisk requires no other notice. The dog, so to speak, "has had her day," and she at once retires, knowing that the slipper-warming process always precedes only by a few minutes the arrival of her master.

If the lady, when conversing with a friend, introduces the words, "The master will soon be home," or, "I believe the master is coming," Brisk immediately rises, walks to the door, and manifests great discomfort until it is opened, and she can get out of the room.

Yet the lady merely introduces a remark about the master's

return in the course of conversation, and without looking toward the dog or varying her tone. Brisk may be stretched apparently asleep, but she never requires a second warning.

Again, if the lady makes any allusion to her intention of going out when in the dog's presence, Brisk follows her everywhere, dogging her footsteps, and never losing sight of her for a moment, lest she should be left behind. But let her mistress say, "I shall take an omnibus," and Brisk gives it up as a bad job, and retires to her own quarters, sulky and disgusted at being disappointed of her anticipated run.



MINNIE'S CALCULATIONS.

SAID Minnie, with pride,
As she counted her chicks,
"When they're grown a bit bigger
I'll sell all the six;
And as each ought to fetch
At the least half a crown,
I can quite well afford me
A new Sunday gown."

Alas for our castles!
How soon they all slip!
The cat ate one chicken,
And one got the pip;
And while mourning their brother
And sister, the four
Were crushed by the carter-boy
Slamming the door.

"Don't reckon your chickens
Before they are hatched,"
Is a proverb some fancy
Can never be matched;
But I think that this other
Deserves to be told—
"Don't count on their value
Until they are sold."



HARPER'S

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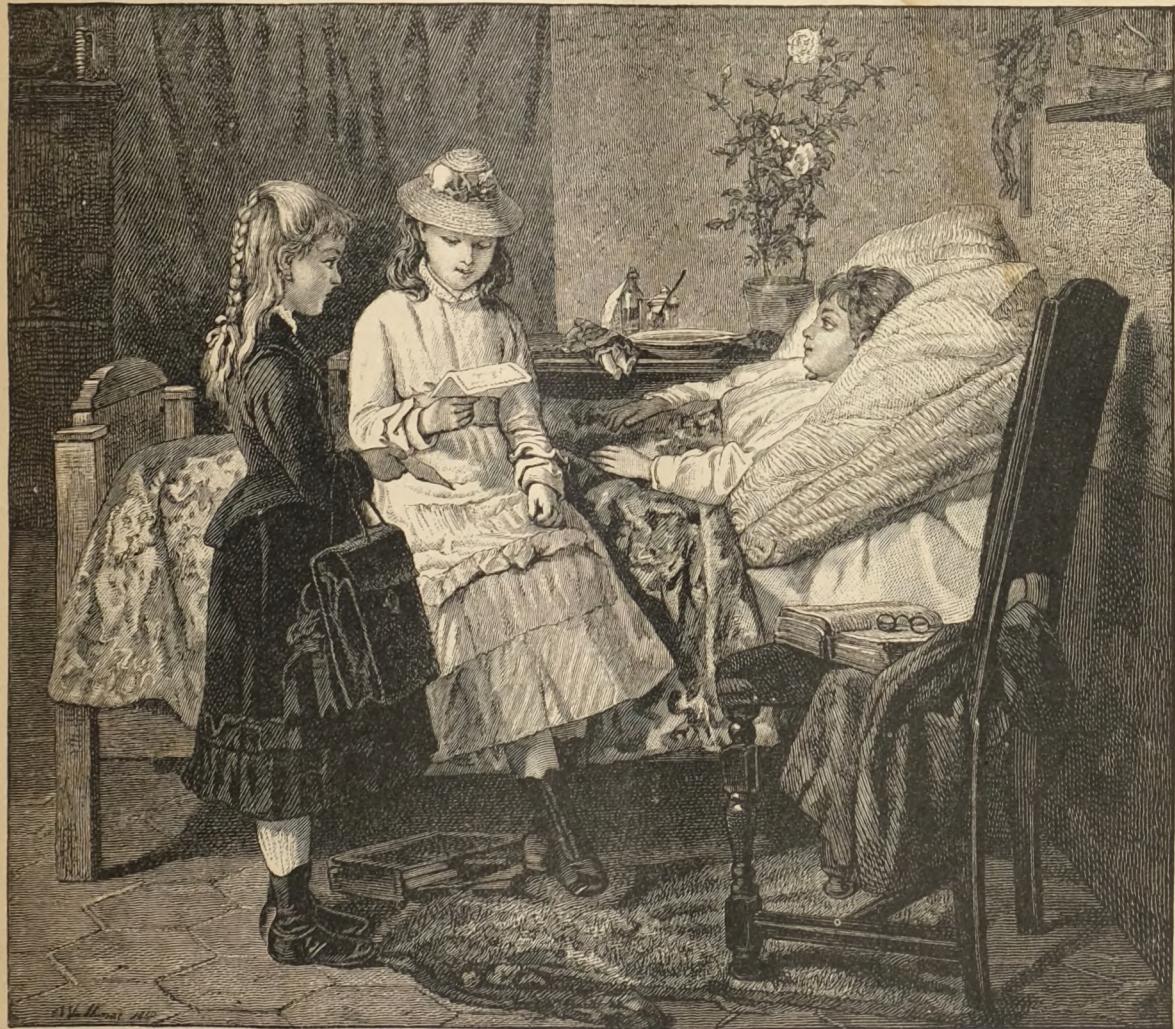
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"WHO WON THE PRIZE SCHOLARSHIP?"

AN HONOR WELL DESERVED.

BY MARGARET EYTINGE.

THE school term was fast drawing to a close. Only one day remained before vacation would begin. And on that day was to be the final examination, to which so many girls looked forward with beating hearts; for that

examination was to decide who were to receive prizes, who were to be promoted, and whose name was to stand highest on the roll of honor.

"Oh, if it should be mine!" said Jessie Dortnall, as, book in hand, she paced up and down the garden-walk in front of her grandmother's pretty cottage. "How glad—how very, very glad I should be!"

There was every reason that Jessie should think it might be hers. Two years ago she had entered the Wexham Academy, and from that time to the present she had been an excellent scholar. Though Jessie lived several miles from the city where the school was, and had to reach it by an hour's railroad travelling every morning, she had been absent but two days. These had been unusually stormy, and it would not have been safe for her to venture out. As for "late" marks, she had never received one, and, indeed, she had very often been seated at her desk before many of the city girls made their appearance. And, oh! she had studied so faithfully for the last six months, for the principal had announced on the 2d of January that the girl in her class whose name led the roll of honor should not only be promoted one step, but two, and also be entitled henceforth to free instruction in the French and German languages.

Jessie was now fourteen, and she was very anxious to finish her education, and to finish it creditably, by the time she was seventeen. Her great desire was to become a teacher, and help her grandmother, with whom she lived, and who was the only near relative she had in the world. The dear old woman fortunately owned the cottage which stood by the side of the lake, but the only income she had was a small pension from the government, her husband having been killed in war, and the money she earned by the aid of her hens, chickens, and cow. She and her granddaughter could have managed to live tolerably well had it not been for the expense of Jessie's schooling. To get the money for that required the most economical and skillful management. Still they did get it. But Jessie would insist upon looking at it in the light of a debt. To pay it back was the wish that lay nearest to her heart.

Well, Jessie had stood side by side with five other girls on the first of the three examination days. On the second there were but two left to compete with her. How would it be on the morrow? "Oh dear! oh dear! I wish it were over!" she thought, as she paused at the garden gate to look at the bonfire some children had built of drift-wood on the beach, about a hundred feet away, and which, the wood being very dry and the day breezy, was burning very rapidly, and showering sparks in every direction.

As she looked the children began to scream and run toward the cottage. Throwing her book down, Jessie unlatched the gate, and fairly flew over the ground in the direction of the frightened little ones. And nearing them, she saw that the clothing of one of the smallest girls was in flames. Quick as thought, scarcely pausing in her flight, she seized the child in her arms and rushed to the lake. In she plunged, and little Molly Clark was saved from a dreadful death. But, alas! Jessie's long floating hair had taken fire as she ran, and though there was such a short space of time before her plunge in the water, the long sunny curls had burned to her very head. Thus it happened that the rescuer was more seriously hurt than the rescued.

No school for her on the morrow. When the first bell was ringing in the city far away, she was lying in her bed, with her head and hands swathed and a soft bandage bound around her eyes, unconscious of everything but pain. And all that summer she lay there, being nursed by her dear old grandmother slowly back to life again. The pansies in her own little garden bloomed and bloomed, and looked up with queer, inquiring faces to her window as though wondering why she never came to praise them, and the lilies that she loved so well opened their fragrant cups and closed them again without a word or smile from her.

But with September came returning strength, and with returning strength came the remembrance of the examination day she had lost and the prize she had hoped to win. "I wonder if I gained *any* prize," she said to herself on the afternoon of the day after that on which school re-

opened. But while she was wondering some one knocked at her room door, and, in answer to her faint "Come in," two of her school-mates entered the room.

"Have I been promoted?" was the first question she asked, and "Who won the prize scholarship?" was her next.

"Listen," said Jennie Moody, seating herself on the side of the bed, and reading from a paper she held in her hand: "There were three girls, each of whom was found quite worthy to rank highest on the roll of honor on the second examination day. On the third and last day one of these girls was absent, but the two remaining ones, still ranking together, both declared they were ready and willing to yield the honor to her, she being every whit as good a scholar as themselves, while in sweetness of temper, and in patient, faithful study, she greatly excelled them."

"All the members of her class agreed in this statement, and the committee finding that her absence was due to the fact of her having on the previous day saved a little friend from death, thereby endangering her own life, they have concluded to depart a little from set rules, and inscribe first upon the roll of honor the name of Jessie Dornall."

"And here in my school satchel," said Effie Green, "I have a whole lot of goodies the girls have sent you."

"Oh, how happy I am!" exclaimed Jessie, the tears of joy running down her cheeks. "How very, very happy I am!"

SIR LOUIS DE LA BALBE CRILLON.

FROM THE GERMAN OF STRACHWITZ.

BY E. M. TRAQUAIR.

SIR Louis de la Balbe Crillon.

The man who never feared a foe,
Sir Louis de la Balbe Crillon,

Who held the fortress of Bordeaux:

Sir Louis de la Balbe Crillon

Lay down to rest at eventide;
The day had been both hard and long,

And in the walls the breach was wide.

Whose sword gleams in the waning light?

Tis gay De Guise, the youthful lord,
Whose clashing armor stirs the night;

Yet slept Crillon, and nothing heard.

"Ha, Montjoie! Awake, Crillon!

The gate is down, the foe is here!"

Sir Louis de la Balbe Crillon

Sprang up at once with tranquil cheer.

With head uncovered, ankles bare,

Nor shield nor helmet sought Crillon.

"The foe! My sword, where is it—where?"

The Duke of Guise laughed loud and long.

"The gate is fast, no foe is near.

In Paris once I heard them tell

None e'er had seen thee quake for fear,

And, sooth, I now believe it well.

"Twas but a sorry jest to try

Thy mettle in a sudden plight.

Forgive me, hero, pass it by!"

But Crillon's brow grew dark as night.

Quailed young De Guise to hear this word,

As face to face the warriors stood:

"Twas well for thee, thou youthful lord,

That I maintained my courage good."

THE BOYHOOD OF MARTIN LUTHER.

MARTIN LUTHER is one of the few great men of the world with whose boyhood we really feel familiar. Our acquaintance with him, indeed, goes back to his boyhood, when he was christened in St. Peter's Church, Eisleben, and received the name of Martin, because he was born on the day sacred to that saint.

All his ancestors were good but poor and uneducated people. He was the son of a peasant, he tells us, the grandson of a peasant, and the great-grandson of a peasant. His father, who had been a wood-cutter, and afterward became a miner, though untaught himself, had a great idea of education, and resolved that at least one of his children should be a scholar. Accordingly, when the boy was only five years old, the father took him one day to Master Nicolas Emilius's school at Mansfeld, where they were then living.

Master Emilius had a reputation for being strict and severe, and Mrs. Luther, Martin's mother, dreaded the idea of putting her little boy in his care. "They say that Nicolas Emilius is so harsh," she ventured to remark to her husband when he suggested the plan. Now Mr. Luther, though a good father, was by no means an indulgent one. He often whipped the little Martin himself, and for fear of him we read that the child would hide away in the great chimney of the cottage; so we are not surprised when we learn that he answered his wife, "The only way to bring up children properly is by fear and chastisement."

With the father and the school-teacher both holding this opinion, it might be expected that the little boy would have a pretty hard time, especially as he proved to be rather a dull scholar. His Latin grammar gave him a great deal of trouble, and when he could not get the cases and tenses into his head, Master Emilius would give him a severe flogging. One morning he was whipped as often as fifteen times.

Even religion was made stern and forbidding. The master never spoke of the Lord but as an angry Judge, and when the boy heard the name of Jesus Christ he grew pale with dread. It was not strange that by-and-by he came to hate his school. "The master is a tyrant," he would declare to his mother, with passionate tears in his eyes. Nevertheless, he staid there nine years, and I have no doubt it was the severe training of Master Emilius, who later on became his own brother-in-law, that disciplined his character for the work which he was afterward to do.

When Luther was fourteen years old his father sent him to school at Magdeburg, and here, since he was very poor, he had to get his bread and butter by singing with the other school-boys in the streets. This was a common custom in Germany, and there was no disgrace in it, but it exposed the young singer to ill treatment, which hurt his sensitive spirit. Once he was singing before a house, when the owner himself, who was rich, came running out, crying loudly, "Where are you, you knaves?"

"We all took to our heels," said Martin, afterward telling the story, "for we thought that we had angered him by our importunity, and he was going to beat us; but he called us back, and gave us two loaves."

In his prosperous old age Luther did not forget that he had sung in the streets for food. "Never despise the poor boys," he urged others, "who sing at the house doors and ask bread for the love of God. How often have I been one of such a group!"

Luther, indeed, had occasion to remember his experience as a singer, since it was in this way that he met his first good fortune. He had gone from Magdeburg to Eisenach, and was singing there one day before a certain house, when the people called him a beggar and a vagabond, and

drove him from the door. "What!" he exclaimed, "are we to be despised because we sing for bread? Have not many great doctors and gentlemen begun like us? Must I give up my studies, return to my father's, and work in the mines at Mansfeld?"

At this crisis Mistress Ursula Cotta, a good woman and a burgomaster's daughter, who had heard the boy's singing, and remarked the abuse which he had received, called him to her door. Here she gave him bread, and, what was better still, motherly sympathy. More than that, she invited him to make her house his home. From that time Martin felt a new ambition.

He had been treated with kindness almost for the first time in his life. His school became interesting to him, his studies were no longer drudgery and toil; and he worked hard to prepare himself for the University. His master at Eisenach, John Trebonius, must have been a very great contrast to the severe Emilius. Trebonius, it is said, would take off his hat to his scholars when entering the school-room, and when asked the reason of his politeness, would say: "There are great men here among us. Some of these boys will one day be men of learning, burgomasters, chancellors, and doctors."

In his eighteenth year Martin entered the University of Erfurt, where he studied more diligently than ever. It was while he was here that he first became acquainted with the Bible. It seems odd that as late as four hundred years ago, in so enlightened a country as Germany, any young man could have lived to be twenty years old without knowing something about the Scriptures. But until he became that age Luther had never even seen a copy. He had never heard the story of little Samuel, upon which his eye fell as he opened the book, and which he read for the first time with the greatest interest and delight. Not long after that he was very much impressed by the sudden death of his dear friend Alexius, who was struck down by lightning at his side. Fearing he might be struck himself, he vowed that if his life were spared he would devote it to God's service.

With the rest of Luther's life everybody is familiar. One does not need to tell how he became a famous preacher, whose doctrines stirred up the whole Christian world, how he defended himself before the most powerful and distinguished princes, how his fearless courage made even his enemies admire him, and how finally he overcame them, and ended his life in honor and in peace. All this has been told many times, and will be told many times again, especially during this month, which brings around the four-hundredth anniversary of his birth. On such an occasion it is worth while recalling, as we have done, some of the incidents of Luther's boyhood, if we may thereby discover the secret of his success.

Has any boy or girl discovered it already? Was it not due to the hardships which he suffered in early life, and the self-denial which they taught him to exercise? Did not the discipline of Master Emilius, harsh though it was, have something to do with it? We do not believe nowadays in flogging boys to make them turn out useful men, and very likely Martin Luther would have been a sweeter and tenderer man if he had not been so sternly treated when he was a boy; but, on the other hand, he might have been less strong and bold, and so, for all we know, Luther's education was just the kind to fit him for the peculiar part which he was called upon to play in after-life.

Very few, however, will care to imitate him in this. Most of us would rather find some other road to success than through floggings and harsh treatment; and even if we were willing ourselves to be whipped, it is not likely that our parents would let us have the chance. Happily there are very few fathers now who believe with Mr. Luther that the way to bring up children is through pun-



URSULA COTTA AND THE BOY SINGERS.

ishment and fear. What we can imitate Luther in, however, is his perseverance, his courage, and his self-denial. These are habits which every one may possess, and which, if they are practiced, will surely bring success, not as great, perhaps, as Martin Luther's, but of the same true and real kind.

THE LOST CITY;*
OR, THE BOY EXPLORERS IN CENTRAL ASIA.
BY DAVID KER.

CHAPTER V.

A FIGHT BY FIRE-LIGHT.

COLONEL HILTON looked very grave over the story of the evening's adventures; he looked graver still when he returned from being presented to the Ameer next morning.

"He was civil enough," said he, as they sat over their mid-day meal in the curtained balcony, "but fine words and armed cut-throats don't fit well together. The fact's just this: the whole city is ready for a row, and the Ameer's doing nothing to keep it down, while the priests are doing everything to get it up."

"Yes," cried Ernest, "there was one of them speechifying to a crowd at the end of the street just now, and they were all shrieking and tossing their arms about like mad."

"And early this morning," added Tom, "a soldier of the Herat regiment went swaggering past our door, and called out to a lot of the Cabool fellows who were lounging about: 'Ha! you let yourselves be beaten by the Ugruz' (English) 'last year; they wouldn't have beaten *us* so easily.'

"Wait a little," says one of the Caboolis, "and you shall see that we can kill the unbelievers as well as you."

"Hm!" said Professor Makaroff. "It seems to me, my friends, that the best thing you can do is just to pack your things and come with me to-morrow when I start to look for the Lost City."

"You forget, Pavel Petrovitch," replied the Colonel,

"that we are now attached to the Envoy's suite, and mustn't go till he goes. Besides, I don't suppose they would think of attacking a Russian mission; it's their game to be friends with Russia, now that the English are threatening them again. It's poor Major Cagnari and his guard that they mean to butcher; but I'll go and warn him this very day."

Colonel Hilton did so, but all in vain. The brave Englishman was as kind and courteous as ever, but nothing could persuade him to take any precaution against the fatal snare which every one saw plainly except himself.

"Many thanks for your kindness, Colonel Hilton, but there's nothing to be feared from such curs as these. They may yelp and show their teeth, but they've not pluck enough for a fight. Moreover, I have been placed here by our government, and I

need not tell an American officer that the last thing which should make any soldier quit his post is the fear of personal danger."

The next day Professor Makaroff, with a strong escort of Cossacks, three or four Afghans, and a Tartar guide, started on his hunt for the Lost City, with as jolly a smile upon his little round face as if he were only bound on a picnic, instead of a journey through one of the most perilous regions in all Asia. When he was gone the rest of the party had leisure to notice that their Afghan servant, Sikander, had been missing nearly two days.

"That's bad," said the Colonel, shaking his head. "I can guess where he's gone, for when a row of this sort once begins, it's safe to draw in every Mohammedan within reach. He's been true as steel all the time I've had him, but one might as well try to tame a wolf as one of these Afghans."

And now the signs of the coming storm began to multiply on every side. All the bustling groups of merchants, store-keepers, porters, water-carriers, sellers of fruit or sherbet, that ordinarily crowded the streets, had vanished, and in their stead appeared a throng of wild faces and glittering weapons, while the air rang with cries of "Death to the unbelievers!" After night-fall the streets seemed deserted, as usual; but it did not escape Tom Hilton's keen eye that in every dark corner several shadowy figures were lurking, as if awaiting some expected signal. The few European residents were never seen outside their closely shut houses, and even our thoughtless heroes felt like men standing on the deck of a burning powder-ship.

So matters went until the evening of the fourth day after the Professor's departure. Colonel Hilton had accompanied the Russian Envoy to the palace, and our two friends were together in one of the lower rooms, when the curtain of the doorway was suddenly thrown back, and the missing Sikander stood before them. But his plain dress was now replaced by the gold-fringed turban and snow-white robe of an Afghan chief, a jewelled *yataghan* (sword), and a brace of silver-mounted pistols hung at his girdle of red silk, and his once grave and stolid face was all ablaze with fierce excitement.

"Sons of a noble chief," said he, in his sonorous native tongue, "hear the words of Sikander Beg. When my

enemies drove me from my own land your father gave me shelter. I have eaten his bread and salt, and his friends are the friends of Sikander. None will harm you here, but as ye love your lives, stir not forth to-night."

The curtain fell behind him, and he was gone.

Both lads sprang to their feet at once. There was no need to speak: the same thought was in the minds of both. In a moment they were wrapped in the long Afghan mantles which they had bought as mementos of Cabool, and within two minutes after being warned that it was certain death to stir out, they were hurrying toward the British Residency.

Night had already set in, and the streets through which they passed were completely deserted, while the silence was broken only by a dull, distant sound, like the moan of a far-off sea. But they were barely half-way to the Residency when a strong hand grasped Ernest's shoulder, and a familiar voice chuckled, hoarsely:

"You should always git all your men together, Mr. Ernest, afore you goes into h'action. Wherever Captain Clairmont's son goes, old Bill Barlow goes too."

There was no time to argue, and a few minutes more brought the three to the Residency, at the door of which stood Major Cavagnari himself, listening, with a look of stern gravity on his handsome sun-brownèd face, to the distant murmur, which was gradually swelling into a deep hoarse roar. The boys told him breathlessly that the threatened attack had come at last, and were begging him to come and take refuge with them before it was too late, when their words were drowned by a trampling of countless feet and the ear-piercing yell of the Afghan war-cry,

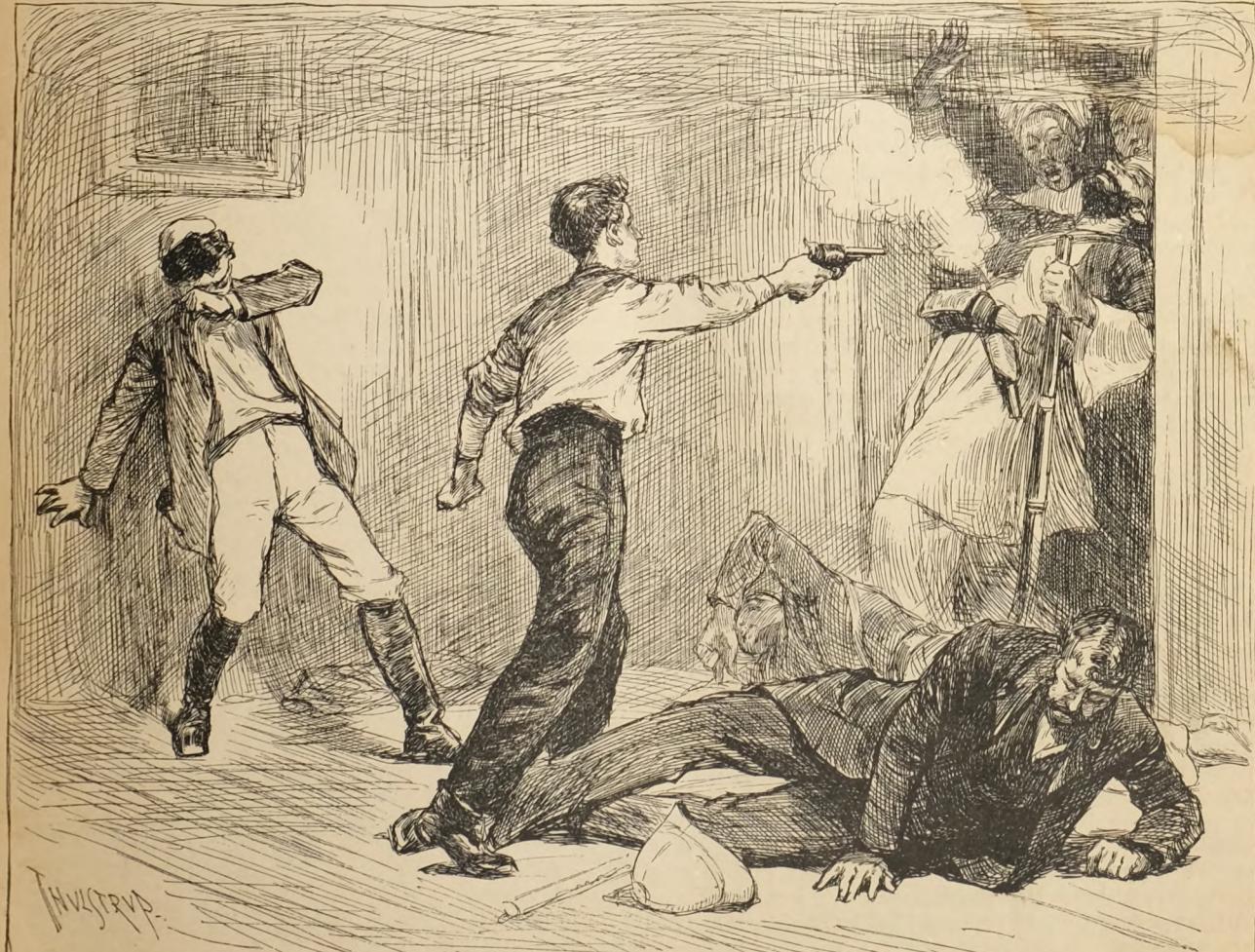
"Deen, deen!" (the faith, the faith). They had barely time to spring inside and bar the heavy gate behind them when all outside it was one roaring sea of rags, dirt, knives, struggling limbs, hideous faces, and wolfish cries.

"It's too late now, my brave lads," said Cavagnari, "and I'm only sorry you should have risked your lives for me to no purpose. Luckily, I've only three Englishmen here besides myself, so England won't lose much by our death."

The fearless words were answered by a crash of stones against the front of the building, while the strong gate began to echo with the blows of its assailants. At the same moment a yell from the garden showed that the mob had scaled the boundary wall, and that the house was now beset on every side.

Ernest felt his pulses tingle, and the blood rushed through his veins like living fire, as he seized a rifle and hurried to his post. He seemed to have grown up in a single moment. Yesterday he was a light-hearted boy, without a thought beyond the present instant; to-day he was taking part in events which were to change the fate of a kingdom and to live forever in history. In his excitement he hardly thought of the certain death that awaited them all; for what chance had the twenty-five Hindu regulars and fifty irregulars, who, with the three Englishmen above mentioned, formed Cavagnari's entire garrison, against the whole population of Cabool?

And now the battle began in earnest. A spattering fire of matchlocks and pistols ran through the crowd, lighting up their wild figures and savage faces; and showers of stones were hurled at every window, while a few of the



boldest, encouraged by seeing no sign of resistance, closed in and began to batter the gate with axes and hammers.

"Fire!" shouted a stern voice overhead.

The flash and crack of the volley came as the thunder-clap follows the lightning, and the shrieks and groans that rose up out of the darkness below bore fatal witness to its effect. For one moment the wave of assault recoiled, but only to surge forward again. The firing was now incessant on both sides, and the doomed house stood out against the surrounding blackness amid a dancing ring of flame, when suddenly the cracks of the rifles and the yells of the Afghans were out-thundered by a tremendous roll of musketry, which seemed to shake the very air.

"'Twas no raw hands that fired *that* volley," cried Bill Barlow, who, overjoyed already at being once more among trained soldiers, was doubly so to find a disciplined force opposed to him. "Hurrah! I never thought I'd have the luck to fight agin reg'lar troops any more!"

It was too true. The Herat regiment had just joined the assailants (thus proving that the besieged could hope for no help from the Ameer), and with it came a new and terrible enemy. Either from wanton mischief or settled purpose, the Afghans had fired the little summer-house in the garden; and the flames catching the surrounding trees and bushes, which were dry as tinder from the long heat, the whole inclosure was soon one red and roaring blaze.

Thicker and thicker rolled the smoke, hotter and hotter grew the air. Tom and Ernest, half stifled, crept out upon the balcony, hidden by the smoke—for the house itself was now on fire. But a sudden gust rent the cloud, and amid the sea of upturned faces below, which the blood-red glare threw out with ghastly clearness, they saw *one* familiar countenance turned toward them with a look of agony and horror, such as might be worn by a man who, striking at a supposed enemy, finds that he has killed his only son. It was the face of Sikander!

The next moment a shower of bullets drove them back into the burning house, and in a momentary lull of the firing they could hear the enemy bursting in below.

"Shake hands, old boy," said Tom; "it's all up now. God bless you!"

All that followed was like a troubled dream. Ernest was dimly aware of the door falling inward before a rush of shrieking Afghans, of Bill felling the foremost with his clubbed rifle, and being himself thrown down the next moment. He saw Tom stagger back against the wall, and sprang in front of him. Then he opposed himself singly to a dozen of the enemy, firing his revolver right in their faces. Then came a heavy shock, a pang of sharp pain, and all was a blank.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE EXTRA TICKET.

BY ELIOT MCCORMICK.

MR. JOHN STEVENS was the teacher of a Sunday-school class of seven boys. They were engaging boys; that is, they engaged their teacher's undivided attention in the class, since he was never sure but that they would fire paper wads across the room, or draw the curtain that ran on a rod directly above their heads, or otherwise misconduct themselves so as to excite the just wrath of the Superintendent, and disgrace both Mr. Stevens and themselves. To tell the truth, they had never done these things, at least since John Stevens had been their teacher, but he had heard of their doing them before, and fancied that they might do them at some time again, and so kept his eyes pretty steadily fixed on Tom Drew and Percy Flint, knowing that if he could hold these two, he was sure of the rest.

Notwithstanding their faults and the trials which they often caused his patience, Mr. Stevens was fond of the

boys, and believed that they were fond of him. Once in a while he would have them around to his house, or take them out for an afternoon, and on one occasion they all went to the American Institute Fair. The boys are several years older now than they were then. They do not fire paper wads, the curtain hangs undisturbed, and their general conduct is quite correct. But as long as they may live they will never forget the excursion of that night, and the little drama in which they took part.

If George Maclay had been able to go, there would not have been any drama at all; but after they had got so far as to buy the Fair tickets at the elevated railroad station George became suddenly ill, and declared that he must go home. He would not let anybody go with him. It was bad enough to lose his own fun, without spoiling any one else's; so he mournfully bade them good-night, and went down the long flight of steps.

This left Mr. Stevens with one ticket over, and after they had got in the car the boys discussed among themselves what should be done with it.

"Let me sell it for you, Mr. Stevens," Tom Drew proposed. "I'll stand outside the door and offer it for forty cents. 'Most anybody'll give me that for it."

"Oh, get out!" objected Percy Flint. "You don't suppose Mr. Stevens is going to sell it, do you? He'll give it away. Ain't you going to give it away, Mr. Stevens?"

Mr. Stevens laughed. "I'll tell you what I'll do," he said; "I'll give it to any one whom you six boys agree upon."

This was putting a heavy responsibility upon them, and the boys looked at one another with as much gravity as if the ticket had cost five dollars.

"Well," said Tom Drew, looking up and down the car, "suppose we give it to that old fellow down there in the corner."

"That foreigner!" exclaimed Bob Merritt, surveying the man's shabby clothing and sad countenance. "He'd better go to the poor-house; that's the place for him."

This seemed the opinion of the rest; and, indeed, there appeared to be no one in the car on whom they could all agree.

"Oh, there's nobody here that wants one," said Percy at length. "Let's wait till we get out. There'll be somebody hanging around the door."

When finally they reached the Fair station, and had descended to the ground, they looked eagerly around for a subject, so eagerly, in fact, that Pete Terry missed his footing, and fell half down in a dirty pool of water.

"There, now!" he exclaimed, discontentedly. "My clean cuffs, too! That's just my luck!"

"Well, you'll have to let them dry," said Mr. Stevens. "But you can let this boy rub off your shoe. Here, boy," addressing a bright-faced boot-black, "just clean off this young man's shoe, will you?"

The boy planted his box at Pete's feet, and looked inquisitorily into the other's face.

"They're all wet," said Pete, complainingly.

"It is only on the outside that they are wet," spoke the boy, with a quaint German accent. "See! I will rub the mud off, and then they will be dry again." He began rubbing vigorously, while the other boys looked on. "They would be better yet, but I am only a beginner."

The boys drew a little nearer, while the foreigner whom they had seen in the car brushed by them into the Fair.

"Well, you do first-rate for a beginner," remarked Percy, approvingly. Then turning to the rest: "I say, fellows, why can't we give the ticket to this little chap? He looks as if he'd appreciate it. Have you ever been inside here?" he asked.

The boot-black shook his head. "I am waiting here," he said, "for my father."

"Your father?" said Percy. "Why, where has he gone?"

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A pained look came into the little boy's face. "Ah, I do not know," he said.

"But when did he leave you?" asked Percy. "Did he tell you you mustn't go till he came back?"

"Ah, no. It was six months ago that he left me, and I have been looking for him ever since."

"But did you stay in the house where he left you?" asked Mr. Stevens.

"The woman would not let me stay, and I had no friends. We had only been one month in the country."

Percy moved up to Mr. Stevens. "May we give him the ticket, sir?" he asked.

"Are you all agreed?" the teacher inquired.

Each boy nodded.

"All right, then," said Mr. Stevens. "Here it is."

Percy turned toward the boot-black. "Here, Carl, or Hans. What is your name, anyway?"

"My name is Max," he said, simply—"Max Steinkamp."

"Well, Max," said Percy, a little embarrassed at the idea of making a presentation address, "you see we've got one extra ticket, and Mr. Stevens told us we might give it to anybody we pleased, and we're going to give it to you."

The boy's eyes shone with a misty glow. "To me!" he exclaimed. "Is it me you mean?"

Percy pushed the ticket in his hand. "Why, to be sure," he said. "Here it is. Go in now, and see the whole thing."

Max looked at it for a moment. "And will it let me hear the music too?" he asked.

The boys laughed.

• "You ain't deaf, are you?" asked Tom, not unkindly. "If you once get inside the building you can't very well help hearing the music."

He drew a long breath. "Ah," he exclaimed, "that will be *himmelschön!*" dropping, without knowing it, into a language where the boys could not follow him.

Tom laughed again as he turned away. "Listen to the little fellow speak Dutch!" he said. "I shouldn't wonder if he was a sort of genius."

"You don't think he'll sell the ticket, do you, Mr. Stevens?" said Bob Merritt, as the boy still lingered outside.

The teacher smiled gravely. "I would as soon expect one of you to sell his," he said. "Max is waiting till we get in; that is all. He has a sort of delicacy about intruding his company upon us. If you wait a minute you'll see him come in."

They stopped for a moment just outside the door, and presently, as Mr. Stevens had said, Max entered. His box was slung over his shoulder, and people looked at him wonderingly as he went by, as though a boot-black were out of place amid such fine surroundings. But he was too much interested in what he saw to care for their looks or their remarks. He had stopped short on entering, and stood looking down the long building, thronged with people and show-cases, and brilliant with the electric light.

"Ach!" they heard him say; "so *schön!*" Then he moved slowly away, like one in a dream, and in a moment was lost in the crowd.

The boys, following Mr. Stevens, soon found their attention absorbed by the objects of interest on every side. They accepted freely all the cards and circulars that were offered them, gazed with fascinated delight upon the mechanical furniture that became by a touch "a bed by night, a chest of drawers by day," prowled dangerously near the engines, crushing-machines, and jig-saws, and exploded in riotous laughter over the convex and concave mirrors, which expanded Pete Terry's round face into the size and shape of a mammoth pumpkin, and narrowed Bob Merritt's lean visage into the thinness of a bean-pole. Finally, when they had quite exhausted the lower floor without having seen their little boot-black again, they went upstairs. Here, as they entered the door, they discovered Max standing by one of the pianos, listen-

ing to the performance of a lady. His back was turned, so that he could not see them. Presently the lady stopped and left the piano; and then the boys, who waited at a little distance, saw Max draw a step nearer to the stool, and lay his hand upon the keys.

"I wonder if the little chap thinks he can play," whispered Tom Drew.

He had hardly spoken when Max touched a few notes; and then, as if awakened by the sound, he sat down at the instrument, and struck a full rich chord. The blacking-box slipped from his shoulder, and withdrawing one hand from the key-board, he let the box fall upon the floor. Then, unheeding the crowd that was already gathering around, he began to play. And such playing few of the company had ever heard. How had the little boot-black ever become such a master of the art? Where had he got his wonderful execution, and the still more wonderful touch that made people's hearts beat and their breath come and go with every note? If the boy were not playing before his eyes, Mr. Stevens could not believe that it was he, but the testimony of both his eyes and ears left no room for doubt. By-and-by Mr. Stevens became aware that some one was crowding in between Percy and himself, and turning around, he met the excited gaze of their foreign-looking friend.

"Who is that?" the man asked, hoarsely. "What is the boy's name?"

Percy looked at Mr. Stevens, and the teacher nodded.

"His name is Max Steinkamp," the boy explained; and then something prompted him to say, "And he's lost his father."

The man would have fallen if Mr. Stevens had not held him up. In a moment, however, he had recovered himself. "Ah, my little boy," he murmured, "it is I who am his father. And I have searched for him—ah, so long!—ever since I came out of the hospital. Listen to the air which he plays. It is that which his mother used to sing to him. When I heard it outside I knew it was the little Max that was playing, and that he was playing it for me. But I do not want to make what you call a scene here. Will you not tell him to come down-stairs, and I will be there?"

"We'll go down with you," said Mr. Stevens, who was not going to run the chance of losing Mr. Steinkamp again. "Percy, you wait here, and bring Max down in a minute or two."

"But do not tell him," said the German, "till he stops playing. His soul is far away from here; wait till it comes back."

It was some minutes that Percy had to wait, while the boy went on with his beautiful and bewildering music; but if the father could bear the delay, he certainly could, and so he did not move forward until the music died away in a low sweet strain. Then he laid his hand lightly on Max's shoulder.

The boy looked up in a frightened way, while the people round, who took Percy for some kind of an official, murmured their disapproval.

"Did I do wrong?" Max inquired, recognizing his friend. "Ought I not to have played?"

"No, no," was the reply; "you did quite right. It was beautiful. I never heard such playing in my life. But Mr. Stevens wants to see you down-stairs. Who taught you to play?" he asked, as the crowd scattered, and they went toward the staircase.

The boy's eyes filled. "It was my father," he said. "Ah, he was a Professor, and a great player. You would see his name all over Germany. But now—"

They had nearly reached the foot of the stairs, and looking down on the crowd, the boy had caught a sudden glimpse of a strangely familiar face. Max hesitated doubtfully for a moment. Then he jumped down the three remaining steps, and rushed up to the waiting group.



"HIS SOUL IS FAR AWAY FROM HERE."

"My father!" he cried. "Hast thou come at last?"

The Professor took his little boy in his arms. "Ah, mine son!" he exclaimed, "it was the music and these good friends that gave thee back to me."

"Well, really," said Percy, as though the class ought not to take any undeserved credit, "it was George Maclay that did it; for if he hadn't staid home, there wouldn't have been any extra ticket. Only it's a pity that George couldn't have had the fun too."

"You can't have your cake and eat it too," remarked Mr. Stevens. "And now we'll leave Mr. Steinkamp and Max to themselves. Only we want to see you both again."

The Professor promised that they should, and so, in fact, they did. For this, as I have said, happened some time ago; the Professor is now a prosperous man, with more pupils than he can teach, and Max is becoming a wonderful performer. And when some day or other you hear him at the Academy of Music or the Music Hall, you may remember how it was the extra ticket that put him in the way to develop his great talent.

SHETLAND PONIES.

BY ROBERT RICHARDSON.

SHETLAND is a rather remote quarter of the world, and I should not wonder if the majority of boys knew very little about it. Many of you have no doubt heard of Odin, the old Scandinavian god. Well, it is supposed that when he and his followers travelled up from the Caucasian Mountains northward to Norway and Sweden, they took with them a number of small Cossack horses, and that some of these found their way to Shet-

land, for the Shetland ponies very closely resemble the small horses of certain parts of Norway.

Shetland ponies are chiefly remarkable for their small size and their wonderful pluck, strength, and hardness. In his native home a Shetland pony rarely has the snug quarters which he usually finds when he is taken south and becomes the riding-horse of some little boy or girl.

He has frequently to endure cold, hunger, and exposure of all kinds in a bleak and cheerless country. He has need, therefore, for his rough, shaggy coat and his hardy little frame. They enable him to endure privation and hardship which would speedily overcome animals that are much larger and stronger in appearance.

Almost every family in Shetland owns two, three, or more ponies, which are used for all purposes of draught and carriage, for bringing in the farm produce—corn, hay, potatoes, and the rest—as well as for riding. If a Shetlander has no cart, he slings a couple of wicker baskets over his pony's back, in which baskets he places his marketing, or his load of

peat, or clods of dried turf, which form so large a part of his winter fuel.

We call these little animals ponies, and rightly, but the Shetlanders always speak of them as horses, for the good reason, I suppose, that they are almost the only horses they know. They are often great pets in the family. A writer on Shetland, a native of the island, in speaking of the ponies, says: "All sorts of pretty and uncommon names are chosen for them. Some of them develop a great fondness for sweetmeats, for which they will seek the hand that caresses them. One of these animals, when on a journey, will every quarter of an hour or so turn his head round to his rider, seeking the bit of biscuit which is always provided for him."

Altogether the Shetlanders would do very badly without their sturdy, useful little horses, and when the ponies are taken far south to England, or to countries much farther away still, their value by no means diminishes. They find homes among the rich of the land, become the pets on many a home-farm and country house, and boys and girls, whatever their condition or circumstances, think themselves fortunate in possessing a Shetland pony.

In America we have large numbers of Shetland ponies, and at the Horse Show recently held in New York city, thousands of visitors flocked to the stalls where these cunning little animals were placed on exhibition. On the opposite page our artist has given the portraits of the leading favorites. The special prize offered for the best and smallest Shetland pony was awarded to Midget, a beautiful little creature, black as a coal and only thirty-eight inches in height, or about as large as some of the Newfoundland dogs with which we are familiar. Roxie and her cunning piebald colt were visited and admired by



hundreds of boys and girls, who played with the little creature, while the proud mother stood eying them with delight.

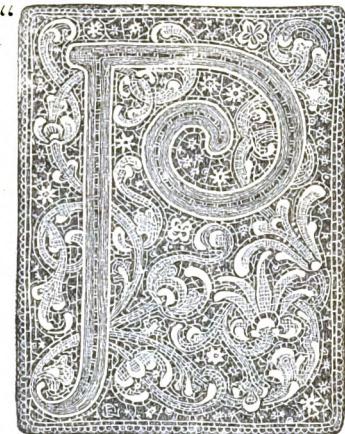
Boy reader, value your pony, and make the most of him as long as you can. Treat him well and wisely, and in after-life the delight you had in him will remain with you as a most pleasant memory. For my part, I can nev-

er see a pony in the street, whether being led by a groom or with a young rider on his back, without a strange feeling, half pleasure and half some other kind of feeling that is more like sadness, while my memory travels swiftly back to the days when I was a boy, and spent so many happy hours in company with Tiny, my beloved Shetland pony.

AMONG THE STROLLERS.

BY E. HAROURT BURRAGE.

III.



ERFECT curiosities, every one! The most wonderful exhibition ever put before the British public. The Hassan family; the spineless brothers of the Cork—hashus; a tight-rope performer unrivalled in the known world; juggling feats, and the laughable antics of Mr. Merriman. And the charge to see and enjoy the whole is only—one penny. I say one penny—a penny!"

Northley Fair ought to have been in full swing, but the weather was not good. It opened cloudy, and soon settled in with heavy rains, with a dash of sleet now and then, and gusts of wind that penetrated to the strollers' bones. Mrs. Barker, in the little pay-box, where she ought to have been busy taking money, had nothing to do but arrange and re-arrange the garments wrapped about her, and shiver as the cold spray was dashed upon her face by the pitiless blast.

The British public was represented by about a dozen boys, who lingered about Barker's show to see what could be seen for nothing. The peep-shows had closed, the owners of the swings and roundabouts given up business as a thing not to be done, and Barker was making a final effort to add to an audience within some half a dozen strong.

"Are any more coming up?" he cried. "There is a nice little party inside," he inwardly groaned, as he thought how little that party was, "and we are now going to begin. Ring up there for the spineless brothers. Now going to begin. I say—we are now going to begin."

There was not another penny to be got, and the showman, turning to Mrs. Barker, bade her close the box, and tell the Hassan family to cut it as short as possible.

"And what are you going to do?" asked Mrs. Barker.

"I am going to see how the boy is getting on," he replied; "you follow as soon as you can."

The showman's face wore an anxious look as he quietly entered the van. The only occupant was Harry Vernon, seated near the small stove, in which a fire was burning.

"How goes it, my lad?" said Barker, his usually rough tones wonderfully softened down.

"My cold is better," the boy replied. "What a bad night it is!"

"Bad all round," rejoined Barker; "there hasn't been a pound taken in the fair to-night."

"Not much to put on the drum," said Harry.

"No, my lad. But you are better, ain't you?"

"I have never been ill. It was only a cold." And Harry tried to sit upright and look strong, but the effort was a failure, and he sank back against a chest covered with a rug, which had been placed at his back.

"Only a cold, in course not," said the showman, and he turned aside to stifle a groan. A few minutes afterward Mrs. Barker came in, bringing in with her a rush of icy blast. She quickly closed the door and bolted it.

"The children," she said, "are going to sleep at Matley's, and Hassan and the rest will do as well as they can in the booth."

"I hope it won't come down atop of them," said Barker, grimly.

"And now I'll give you a bit of supper," said Mrs. Bar-

ker to Harry, "and see you to bed. Me and Barker have got an invitation to a party, and we shall stop there to sleep."

"Then you do have parties sometimes?" said the boy.

"Oh yes."

"And laugh and sing?"

"When things is 'propriate," put in Barker, "as they are to-night—uncommon."

"We are going to keep our spirits up," said Mrs. Barker, cheerfully, "and hope for better times."

Bustling about, and humming fragments of tunes, she soon had supper ready. There was not much to eat, but the Barkers pleaded the necessity of curbing their appetites until they got to the party, and touched nothing. Harry ate very little, but appeared more tired than anything else, and was easily induced to go to bed.

At length he fell asleep, and the woman rose up and stood by him, watching his somewhat labored breathing with a sorrowful look on her face.

"A pretty lad and a brave one," she said, softly. "I wonder what his real story is?"

"I gather from what he's dropped," replied Barker, "that it ain't a happy one."

"Of course it isn't, or he wouldn't be here. The lad's not met with good treatment. I tried to make him tell about it at Mayfield, but all he said was that he had no complaint to make about anybody, and that he wished to stop with us, and earn his living."

With a gentle hand she tucked in the coverlet, and listened again to the boy's breathing. It was more labored than she liked to hear it. "I'll have a doctor here in the morning," she said, "if he isn't better."

She put a shawl over her head, and they went out, taking the precaution to lock the door behind them, and sped through the sleet and rain to an opening in the canvas at the back of the booth.

There they found the troupe assembled around a fire burning in a brasier in the centre. The seats had been taken to pieces, and put round on end, with sacks and bits of canvas hung over them so as to form a very fair screen. Considering their means, they had made a very comfortable place of it.

"Now, my lads," said Mrs. Barker, cheerily, "it's Hobbs's fare to-night—bread and onions, with enough cheese to look at; and I think we can have half a gallon of beer."

"Hullo! here's old Cobley," interrupted Barker, as the canvas was raised; but, on looking up, his face changed. "No, it ain't; I vow—if it ain't old Fiddler!"

And Fiddler it was, soaked to the skin.

"Stop a minute," he said, "and I'll speak." But he did not appear to be very miserable, for there was a smile on his wan face that none around him had ever seen before.

"Now I'm ready," he said, rising. "Come out with me, Barker, and bring your missus with you."

They went out with him, and to their amazement found a tall gentleman wrapped in mackintosh standing near by. Fiddler, who was burning with excitement, cried out,

"Don't ask any questions, but take him where that dear lad is."

"At once, if you please," said the stranger, in the tone of a well-bred man; "I may as well tell you that I am his father."

They hurried through the mud, Mrs. Barker going on before to unlock the door.

"Is he ill?" asked the stranger, stepping quickly to the bedside, and stooping over the boy, who still slept soundly.

"I wouldn't like to call him ill," replied Mrs. Barker; "at the same time he isn't what I should call well."

The stranger bent over him, and lightly touched the boy's cheeks with his lips. As he did so a tear fell upon the locks that had fallen over the sleeper's forehead.

"It appears to me," he said, "that you have been very kind to him."

"We have done our best," Mrs. Barker replied. "When George brought him to us he said that he was among us with his father's consent. 'He is to have a dose, and a rough dose, of strolling, to sicken him of it,' were George's words; but I saw at once that he couldn't stand it; and really you must excuse me, sir, but I've wondered what sort of man his father could be."

"You were told a falsehood. The true story is simply this: My name is Hartley, and I am Colonel of a Bengal regiment. The mother of this poor boy died five years ago—the climate of India killed her—and I was afraid I should lose my child also; so I sent him to England to be taken care of by one whom I thought I could trust—my brother."

For a moment a cloud darkened the speaker's brow; but it swiftly passed, and he quietly went on:

"I forgot that this boy stood between my brother and some property. The child was treated cruelly. His fancy for a strolling life was played upon, and Gypsy George and a man named Binder were employed to lure him away. What the real object of my brother was I will not say, but I do hope, for the sake of humanity, that it was not with the design of his life being ended by the privation and exposure that must have been his lot."

"He couldn't have stood much of it," said Mrs. Barker; "from the first I could see that the young gentleman wasn't equal to it."

"A letter I received from my boy in India," resumed the Colonel, "led me to think that something was wrong. He did not complain of anybody or anything, but the tone was very sad, and, as I had some leave due to me, I hastened to England. This afternoon I arrived at my brother's house, and learned that Harry had disappeared. I found the worthy old man who brought me here to-night."

The return of Fiddler with a doctor checked further dwelling upon the miserable scheme and its failure. A brief examination of the sleeping boy showed that there was no great cause for anxiety.

"He has a cold, and is a little below the mark. With care and a tonic," said the doctor, "he will be right in a few days."

In the morning, when Mrs. Barker went to the van, she found Harry up and dressed, and engaged in an animated conversation with his father. He was quite another boy, and it was difficult to believe he was the youngster who a few hours before had been so sick and sad.

"I hope you will not think it unkind of us," said the Colonel. "We are going away directly."

"But I shall not forget you," said Harry, quickly, as he took her hand.

"Nor I you," replied Mrs. Barker. "But I would not have you stay among us and live as we do for anything. You must be born to it to bear it."

An hour afterward, the Colonel and his son had left Northley, and the sun, breaking through the clouds, shone upon the fair, where busy preparations for the coming day's work were going forward.

"We shall do good business," said Barker to his wife, as he unfolded a canvas covered with huge pictures of impossible performances, "but wet weather to the end would not have fretted me. The Colonel's behaved like a gentleman, and acted liberal; and as for Fiddler, with a hundred pounds to draw on when he's hard up, he's a millionaire."

"How ye do talk!" said Mrs. Barker. "The pretty little runaway brought with him the key of your tongue, and let it loose."

"He set me a-thinking," returned Barker, "and no man knows what's in him till he's given way to thought. Now all's ready, and the public may roll up as soon as they please. John, give 'em a tune, and let it be your liveliest."

AT THE RACQUET COURTS.

BY SHERWOOD RYSE.

VERY few boys, even among those who are accomplished players in almost every other kind of game, have ever even so much as seen a game of racquets. The reason is that the game requires a building especially constructed for that purpose, and as not only must the four walls be carefully built, but also the floor most perfectly laid, the expense of the building is of necessity very great. It is a pity that this is so, since the game is one of the best of in-door games, and can be played in all weathers.

Perhaps the finest racquet courts in this country are those of the Racquet Club in New York city. As soon as you enter the club-rooms you see that active, healthy amusement is the genius of the place. The men have put off the garments of fashion, and donned the comfortable suit of flannel. Some of them are in the corridor or the reception-room, waiting for their turn at the rowing-weights, or for the court or bowling-alley to become vacant.

Seen from the visitors' gallery, the racquet court has not at all an attractive appearance. It is an oblong room about 70 feet by 35, with perfectly flat walls, and with a rear wall about fifteen feet high. Above this is a gallery, and higher still another gallery. The only means of entrance to the court itself is a small door under the gallery, and lest this should interfere with the game by giving a dead bound to a ball striking it, the door is made of wood at least three inches thick. When we come to consider how the game is played, we shall see that the rear wall plays almost as important a part in the game as either of the other three.

The first glance at the game suggests the more familiar game of lawn tennis, since it is played with a racquet not unlike the tennis racquet. But on examination the racquet will be seen to be lighter in make, longer in the handle, and more circular in the face than its tennis cousin; while the ball is not more than one-third of the size of the tennis ball. What it lacks, however, in size it makes up in hardness. A blow from it is sure to hurt, and sometimes a serious bruise is inflicted.

But if the game is like tennis, where is the net? Well, there is no net, but nevertheless it is necessary to hit the ball over something, and in this case the net is represented by two lines drawn across the front wall. The upper line, which is about ten feet above the floor, is the line above which the ball must be "served"—that is, started, as in tennis. The lower line is only two and a half feet above the floor, and any ball striking the wall above this (except in the service) is good. There can be no doubt about it when a ball strikes below this lower line, for the whole space between it and the floor is made of wood, which gives forth a resounding tell-tale noise whenever a failure is made.

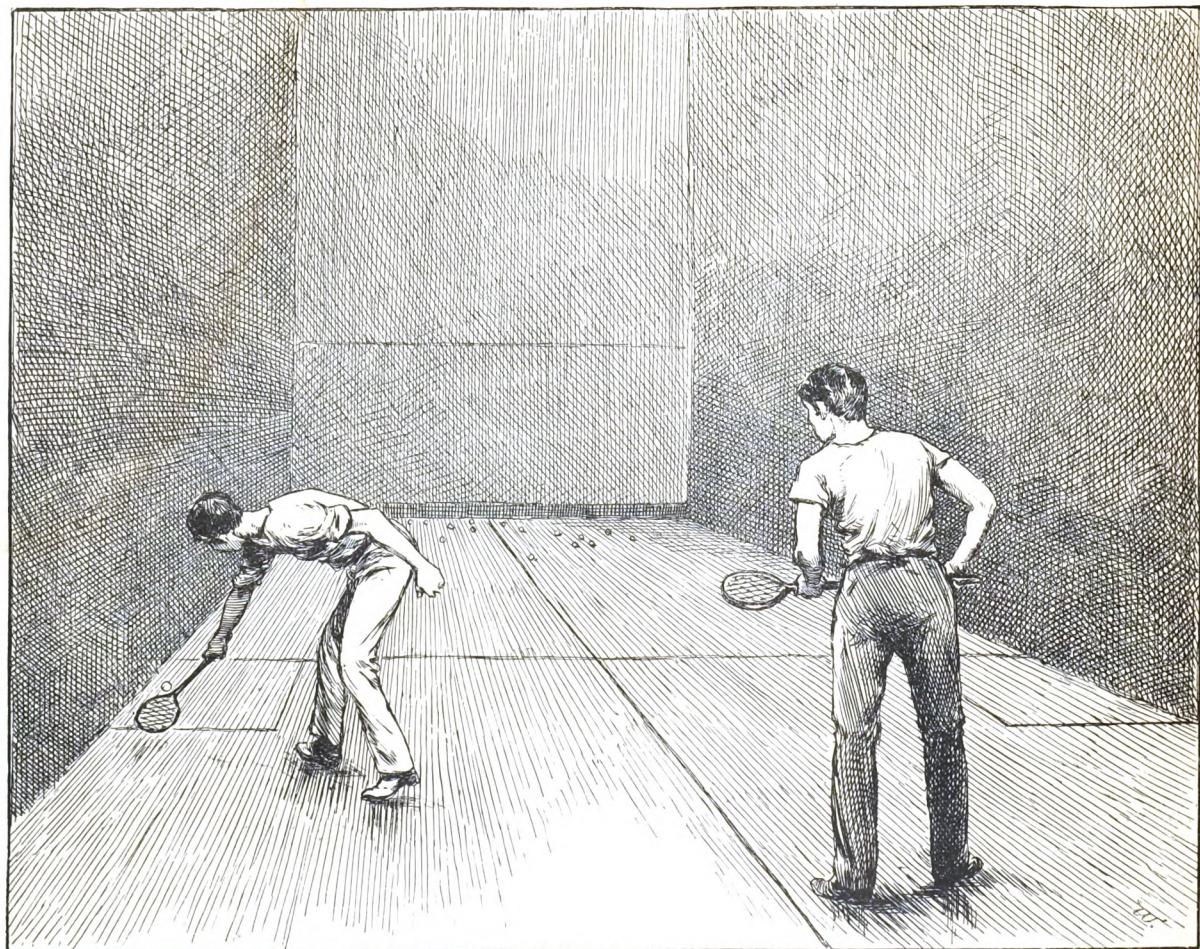
Another feature of the game that is like tennis is the "service." The server stands in one of the square spaces marked off just behind the line running across the middle of the court, and hits the ball so that it strikes the front wall above the upper line, and rebounds into the rear court on the other side. Thus, if he serves from the right-hand side, the ball must fall within the left-hand rear court. In tennis every ball that is not properly served is a "fault," but in racquets it is different. If the ball does not strike the front wall above the lower line, the striker has no other chance given him; but if it strikes between the two lines or falls into the wrong court, although it is not a "good" ball, it is only a "fault," and the server tries again. In tennis a fault can not be taken; but in racquets the striker-out may take a fault if he chooses, and if he does take it or attempt to take it, the service is counted "good."

A racquet player who takes to lawn tennis generally finds himself hitting the ball so hard that it goes out of court every time. He has been used to hitting hard, nearly every ball, in fact, being played with a long, swift stroke. As the court has four walls, there is no hitting out of court in the rear, unless, indeed, the ball goes into the gallery, and except in the service this is rarely done. The "balk" (lower) line being so near the floor, there is no temptation to hit high, but every reason to hit hard. It is almost comical to watch the perplexity of a beginner as the ball flies swiftly past him and rebounds from the rear wall before he knows where it is.

Almost the only exception to the rule of hard hitting is the "drop" stroke, which is a gentle lift of the ball so that it touches the wall just above the balk line, and drops

Those who remember lawn tennis as it was played when first introduced into this country, about five years ago, will recall the method of counting that was then used. When the server failed, his opponent did not count one, but the server simply lost his innings, and the other man served. If, however, the server made a point, he counted it, and continued to serve until he failed, when the other went in. Thus only "hand in," as the server was called, could add to his score.

This is the method of counting still used in racquets, and the "marker," who has a little box all to himself at one end of the gallery, keeps calling out, "One, love," "Two, love," etc., as the game may go; and then, when "hand in" fails, the marker changes his cry to "Love, two," and so forth. The game consists of fifteen "aces,"



A GAME OF RACQUETS.

dead a foot or two from the wall. A good player—one who plays with his *head* as well as his hand—will win many "aces" by this stroke, and he will usually attempt it when he has driven his opponent back near the rear wall. Except the "drop" and the "cut"—which is done in the same manner as in tennis—the game is perfectly straightforward, notwithstanding that, except in the service, the ball need not hit the front wall first, provided it hits it before it touches the floor.

The "volley" is not much practiced in racquets, the swiftness of the ball in flight requiring a surer stroke than can be given "on the fly." Volleying is, however, allowed if any player thinks he can do it successfully; but if the ball is not volleyed it must be taken before it has bounded on the floor a second time, no matter how many walls it may touch in its flight.

or points, and a match is generally two games out of three, or three out of five.

In tennis, when both players have made three points ("deuce"), two more points must be made in succession by the same player in order to win the game. This is for the purpose of lessening the advantage of luck. So in racquets when both players have made thirteen, the game is "set at five"—that is, the game is prolonged to eighteen instead of fifteen points. And if both players have made fourteen points, the game may be "set at three," meaning that three more winning strokes must be made by the same player before he can win the game.

Those of my readers who live in New York, or who occasionally visit that great bustling city, should not neglect any opportunity that offers to visit the Racquet Club, and see the game played as it ought to be played.

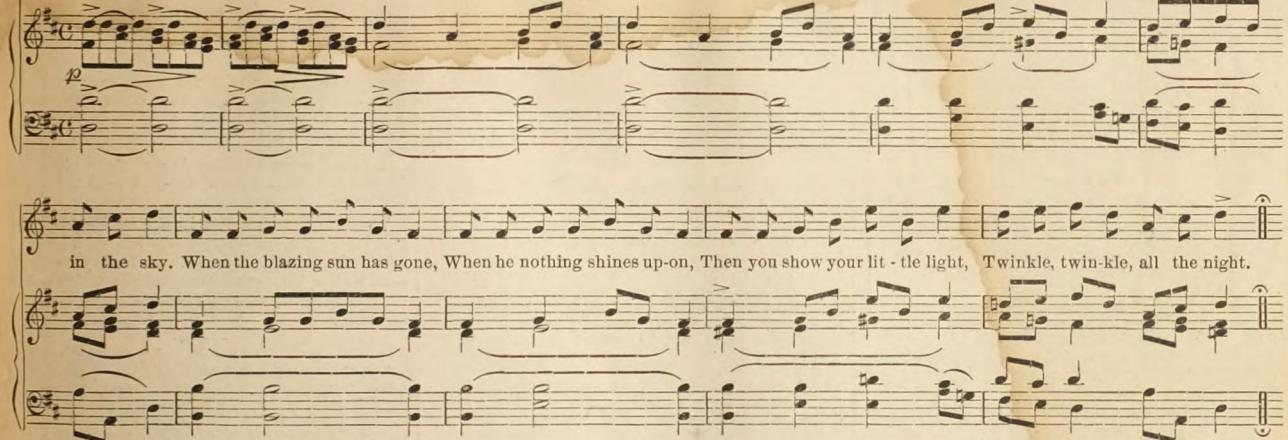


Andantino.

TO DAISY YOUNG.

S. B. MILLS.

Twinkle, twinkle, lit - tle star, How I wonder what you are ; Up a - bove the world so high, Like a diamond





IN THE HOSPITAL COT.

Little sick laddie,
What trouble he's had—
Medicine and blisters.
His cough was so bad!

Now he is better:
He soon will be well,
And go back to mother,
With stories to tell

Of softly reclining
On pillows of down.
Of Sister, his nurse,
In her cap and her gown;

Of the doctor so gentle,
The other sick boys,
And oh! a whole shopful
Of beautiful toys!

ST. MARY'S FREE HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN,
407 AND 409 WEST THIRTY-FOURTH ST., NEW YORK.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—Will you kindly tell your readers that their votes are in favor of a boy, and we have given them a dear little fellow about five years old. He was born in Denmark, and when he came to us last December could speak but little English. One of his queer expressions was so like "Oscar Wilde" that it was taken up by the nurses, and now he refuses to answer to any other name, although his proper one is Jens Hansen. He has undergone a very severe operation, and it will be some months before he can walk, or even sit up. The beautiful china from Maine is his great delight, and he is justly proud of it. Hattie W. Allen and Alice S. Bishop have sent us \$2; Bessie B. Prestly, \$1; Mary D. Hill, 50c.; and through Miss Fanshawe, 21c. For these sums we send them our sincere thanks, and remain their grateful friends.

SISTERS OF ST. MARY.

OUR POST-OFFICE BOX.

THE Postmistress is always thinking about her children, and now she wants to know something about a subject which interests them all. It is school recess. How many recesses, dear boys and girls, do you have in each school day, and how many minutes' long is each? Do you go outdoors to exercise in a play-ground at recess, and are you allowed, when there, to run races, jump, leap, play tag, or any other active game, provided you are not too boisterous? If you stay in the school-room for recess, do you have the windows opened, and are you expected to join in calisthenics or gymnastics? If so, do you enjoy these movements? I would like to receive answers to these questions, and any information about play-time which you can give. Do not write long letters. I shall count the answers I receive to my questions, and I wish to hear from boys and girls both, from pupils in public and in private schools—in fact, from all our young people who are spending the greater part of five days

every week in studying and reciting lessons. If there are any little learners who have no recess during school hours, the Postmistress would like them to write to her too, unless their poor heads ache so badly that they can not oblige her.

CALEDONIA, MINNESOTA.

I have taken HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE ever since it has been published. I think it is the best paper printed. I am very fond of reading. I have a large number of nice books. Have you read L. M. Alcott's *Little Women* and *Little Men*? I think they are just splendid books. I have just been to Chicago to have my eyes examined. Now I wear glasses because I am near-sighted, and at school they call me grandmother, but I don't care so long as I can see. I was twelve years old on my last birthday. I got a blue velvet frame for a cabinet-size picture, and a painted panel and easel, and a birthday card. May I join the Little Housekeepers?

JULIA W. S.

The girls who call you grandmother are not very polite. I hope to hear that they are mending their manners. As I too am near-sighted, I suppose they would call me great-grandmother. Yes, I like both *Little Women* and *Little Men* very much. Welcome to the company of small Housekeepers, dearie.

This is another Indian-summer letter, and a very good one, too.

ALBANY, NEW YORK.

I want to write and tell you of the nice time I had last Saturday, for I am sure you will be interested. In the afternoon mother said I might go out for a walk in the sunshine. I went and asked my friend Mattie to go with me, and she said she would, as she would like to get some sunnac leaves. As we were passing a store we stopped and bought a few apples and chestnuts to eat on the way. We then went to the Park to look for pretty leaves, and we found quite a number. As we were walking along we met a reckless-looking boy, who told us that if we went to the flower beds they would give us some flowers. We paid little attention to this until we saw a number of children coming with their arms loaded with plants. We then thought we would go and try to get some of them. When we reached the flower beds we saw a man taking up an ivy. It was planted like any other plant, except that there was a frame like a house, around which it was climbing. It was a small plant, and had not covered the frame yet, so it was taken up for the winter. We then saw a little child who appeared to be dropping something. When we came nearer we found it to be crumbs for the birds, which were very willing to pick them up. We then thought we would like to make a call on a friend who lived very near the Park. We were invited into a pretty room, where there was a fire in the grate, which made it all the more cheerful, for it was really quite cool out-of-doors. We had a very pleasant time, and in half an hour started for home with our hands full of bright and pretty leaves, with which we mean to decorate our rooms.

LILLIE H. S. (age 11 years).

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY MASTER EDWARD B. REED.

It was in the year 1858 that Colonel Reynolds and Captain Jones were ordered to India, with their regiment, to put down the rebellion. On arriving in India the regiment encamped on the border of a large forest, which the soldiers were anxious to explore; but whenever a soldier went to the Colonel's tent to ask permission to go hunting in the woods, he always returned with a disappointed face, consequently most of the soldiers did not have sufficient courage to make this request of the Colonel.

One day Captain Jones, summoning up his courage, entered the Colonel's tent.

"Colonel," said he, "I hear that there is a man-eater out in the woods, and a large reward has been offered for him. Are you willing that I should join a party that is going in search of him to-day?"

To his surprise, the Colonel immediately assented, and added: "I will go with you. When do they start?"

"I will go and see," said the Captain, and started to make inquiries concerning the hunt. He learned to his regret that the party had started fully an hour before. Hastening back to the Colonel, he suggested that by hurrying they might overtake the party. As the Colonel agreed, the Captain said he would be ready immediately, that he had only to get his gun.

"But where are the guides?"

"Guides?" said the Captain. "What do we want of guides? We have only to follow in their tracks, and we will soon overtake them."

"Why," said the Colonel, "the woods are too thick for us alone, and without a guide I will not go."

So the Captain departed a second time, and very soon returned with two guides. So they did not stop to look at the brilliant tropical flowers

or the wonderful plumage of the birds that flew above their heads, or the luxuriant foliage that surrounded them, but they pressed on, only thinking of overtaking the others.

The woods grew thicker at every step, and they walked on slowly, keeping a sharp lookout on all sides. At last they arrived at a place where the wood was so thick that they were obliged to stop, and one of the guides went boldly in to see if it was safe for them to go farther. Just then the other guide pointed out to them a beautiful bird.

The Colonel and Captain both fired at it. It fell, but as it fell it caught on the branch of a tree. Unwilling to let his game escape him, the Captain went to get it. At that moment a slight rustling was heard, and looking directly in front of him, the Colonel saw a magnificent tiger making ready for a spring. A glance told him that their lives depended upon the remaining guide, as he was the only one whose gun was loaded.

The guide saw it also, and instantly fired, but the shot only wounded the tiger, and made it more enraged. The Colonel was a brave man. He began loading his gun, keeping his eye fixed on the brute. The tiger gave a mighty spring, but it had scarcely left the ground when the report of a gun was heard, and it fell dead within a few feet of the Colonel. The other guide, hearing the shots, had hurried back, and had arrived just in time.

As they were walking home, the Colonel said to the Captain, "Now do you see the use of guides?"

There is a very good lesson in Master Reed's story. Though I do not tell his age, as he requested me not to do so, yet I may safely say that he is a very young contributor. Perhaps he may rival some of our favorite authors in time to come.

LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA.

I notice every week that you print in the Post-office Box nice letters written by young people. May I write too? We have a delightful climate, and are very much pleased with our mountain home, which consists of about 200 acres, a part only of which is cultivated. We have 8000 choice fruit trees, and about six acres of choice grapes. We are never lonely up here, as we go to school in summer, and in winter we practice our music, and that is quite an affair, as we have three violins, a piano, a violoncello, a guitar, and a fife, though at present we practice only on the piano and violins. Harry and I play duets on both together. Every afternoon mamma makes me play on my guitar when I return from school. I am gathering curiosities, and some time I hope to have a nice cabinet. I will exchange sand (put up in little bottles) from Woodward's Gardens, Cliff House Beach, and Santa Cruz Mountains, for sand from any State except Michigan, New Jersey, and Kansas, or from any foreign country. I will also exchange some pressed leaves, for others.

ADA B. WALTERS.

PILOT POINT, TEXAS.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—I go to school. I have five studies, and I like them all. I will compose a verse called "Ruby":

Ruby is a little girl with dark hair and dark eyes. Her mother and father are dead, and she lives with her aunt May in the country. Her aunt is very kind to her, and lets her feed the chickens. She can go to town whenever she wants to. She will be six years old to-morrow, and her aunt will give her a new doll.

FANNIE N. B.

I like to be acquainted with girls who are fond of school, and enjoy their studies. Your little composition is very good.

WESTFIELD, NEW YORK.

This is the second letter I have written to YOUNG PEOPLE, but the other was not published, so I thought I would try again. I am ten years old. My home is in Philadelphia, but for the last two months my sister and I have been visiting my grandmother, who lives in a small town situated between Lake Erie and Lake Chautauqua, where the air is very pure and lovely. The drives are very pleasant, and the scenery so pretty that I have enjoyed many a delightful hour. There is only one point where you can see both lakes at the same time, and that is up on a hill about half-way between the two. The town of Chautauqua is a very queer place. There are a good many tents and small cottages, and they are very close together; it would be very bad if a fire broke out there. During the Assembly, which is held in August, there are crowds of people there. The lake is very nice for rowing and bathing.

FANNIE L. S.

SHIRLEY, SOUTH CAROLINA.

Once upon a time a family of swallows lived in our chimney; they cried morning, noon, and night. One day we heard a louder noise than usual. We all rushed into the room, and found all the little ones lying on the floor. We took them and put them in a box, and shut the chimney up. But with all our precautions we forgot one thing, which nearly proved fatal—we forgot

to sweep the chimney, and next morning we found them tied together. Mamma untied them, and put them back. The mother bird fed them regularly. I don't know what was the matter with them, but a few mornings after we found them limp and lifeless. I could not help thinking, as I saw them there cold and dead, about the mother. How many weeks had she sat upon those little eggs! how many weeks had she fed and loved them with all a mother's pride and fondness! and this was the end. But all that we can do now is to pity her, and say, "Poor mother!"

ALTELENE.

I am rather puzzled, dear, to know who tied the fledglings together, and what the unswept chimney had to do with it. But your letter made me think of a picture of myself in the long, long ago. I was a very wee little girl, when one morning I heard the cry of some swallows which had fallen down the chimney, and which I found on our parlor floor, helpless, hungry things. We put them back, and I forgot now whether they lived or died.

DEEPFIELD, INDIANA.

HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE reaches me every Wednesday, and we are all delighted with it. Papa, mamma, and I take a turn about reading the stories to each other. I like all of Lucy C. Lillie's stories very much. I also enjoy reading the letters, especially those from foreign countries. I have a cousin in China, also a dear little brother at home, whose name is Clyde. I like the study of music very much, but can not go on with it as I would like, on account of my teacher marrying and going to Chicago. I have advanced far enough to be organist in our Sabbath-school. The puzzle column is very interesting to me.

LOTA A.

BRENTWOOD, TEXAS.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—About two months ago I published in YOUNG PEOPLE an offer to exchange advertising cards for silk pieces. The response was so prompt and so generous from almost every State in the Union that my stock of cards was exhausted, and cotton-bolls substituted, which, so far as I learned, were equally as acceptable. I received sufficient silk to complete a fine sofa pillow, which is in truth "a thing of beauty," composed of one hundred and ninety-five pieces of almost as many hues and shades, and is useful as well as ornamental. I am sure those who so generously contributed to it will take pleasure in knowing that these little silk pieces are united with others, and collectively adorn a Southern home.

MAY N.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

When the sumac with its great bunches of red berries, which look almost top-heavy, adorn the hills and country roads, one feels as if autumn were here, and begins getting one's things together for an afternoon in the woods gathering autumn leaves of all hues. Then the boys are very anxious for the frosts to come, and when on getting up some chilly morning they see a heavy frost has fallen, they hasten to get their bags and baskets, and ask mother to put them up a nice lunch, for they expect to be all day gathering their chestnuts. They start off at a reckless pace, and are soon at the foot of the hill. On the way home, as the pleasant sunshine is taking leave for the night, they gather some beautiful ivy to take home to those who are so willing to do kind things for them. They are late about getting home, for the string to one of the bags unfastened, and the nuts went dropping out; but on arriving they found a cheerful fire, and some rosy apples roasting on the hearth.

MARION W.

This, too, is an excellent Indian-summer letter, weaving gracefully in the words assigned by the Postmistress.

CANTON, CHINA.

MY DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—I have often begun letters to you, but have never sent them. I am almost nine years old. There has been a mob here, and fifteen foreign houses were burned; we were very much frightened, and went off to a gun-boat, and staid till night. I sometimes go to the country with my papa and mamma. We have to live in a *Ho ton* boat then. I like to go very much. I like YOUNG PEOPLE very much, and I am sorry that "Raising the 'Pearl'" is ended. I have a little brother and sister. Just behind our house there is a Chinese school. I have a suit of Chinese clothes: the tunic is blue, and the trousers are black; my shoes look quite gay with gold embroidery and red. Our new church is just finished, and is going to be dedicated on Thursday; I have been over to it twice to-day, and I think it is very nice. Which do you think is the nicest story that has ever been printed in YOUNG PEOPLE? I am sending you a puzzle. I should like to see this printed very much.

Yours, with love.

JULIA VAN ARSDALE II.

I am very glad to receive this letter, and I am sure the children will all be charmed to read it. The other girls will wish that they could see you

in your pretty Chinese dress, I am sure. I can not answer your question, my dear, about which story I like best of the many interesting stories which I have read in YOUNG PEOPLE; I like them all. You will see your puzzle in the Puzzle Column one of these days; it is a very good one.

UPPER MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY.

YOUNG PEOPLE is such a favorite with me that I want to tell you how much I enjoy it, especially stories of animals or of brave boys and girls. I see that Jennie E. thinks she is the largest girl there is for twelve years of age; but I have a school-mate of eleven who weighs 137 pounds. My little brother and I have a dear little pet goat named Daisy; I trained her when I was a little girl, and we brought her from Philadelphia. This last summer we have had a "flower mission" on every Friday afternoon, and we would bring flowers and make them into bouquets to send to one of the hospitals in New York for the little crippled children, and as we live at the foot of a mountain, we can get a great variety of beautiful flowers to send to them. I scarcely think you will consider this letter good enough to publish, but maybe the Postmistress will not mind receiving a letter herself from one of her little friends.

ETHER W. II.

This is much too good a letter for the Postmistress to keep as private property. It suggests a way of making others happy, and perhaps next summer there may be many little flower missions who will imitate the Montclair children.

Letters have been received from John W., Alice R., Kittle C., Clara A. R. (I am so sorry about your brother's accident), Villa S. (use blacker ink, dear), Laura M., Nellie C. T., Eddy J. S., Edna L., Marshall B., Alice D., Tina M. D. (your Indian-summer letter shall have its turn soon), Inez and Aie, Martha W. J., Willie W. C. (*Robinson Crusoe* is a most interesting book), E. Louise R. (Pickles is a splendid cat, I am sure).—Fannie B. and Ernest B. C.: Thanks to all.—Nellie McG.: You have an interesting collection of curiosities and reliques. Do you like to read the poems of Alice and Phoebe Cary? I do.—Lelia S. M.: You were very clever to keep house for your papa in your mamma's absence.—Jerome Fort, 467 Evergreen Av., Brooklyn, N. Y., would like to correspond with one or two boys in the South.—Clarence C.: Your school record is honorable to you.

RECEIPTS FOR LITTLE HOUSEKEEPERS.

First in order come some receipts for candy, which were promised some weeks ago:

EVERTON TAFFY.—Melt three ounces of butter in a porcelain-lined saucepan; add one pound of brown sugar; boil until the syrup may be dropped into cold water, and will then break without sticking to the teeth; add the grated rind of a lemon when the candy is half done; a quarter of an hour over a brisk fire should be enough time to cook it; pour it into buttered pans, and set it away to cool.

F. T.

BAILEY-SUGAR.—Boil clarified sugar till, when dropped into water, it snaps like glass; flavor it with essence of lemon, and pour out on a tin platter; separate it into small lumps, and draw these into sticks before they have time to harden.

F. T.

ICE-CREAM CANDY.—Two cups of granulated sugar; half a cup of water; as soon as it boils add one-fourth of a tea-spoonful of cream or tartar dissolved in water; boil until it will be brittle when dropped in water; do not stir; add a piece of butter half the size of an egg just before taking off the fire; let the candy cool, and pull as hot as possible; flavor with vanilla.

E. LOUISE R.

Next follows an easy receipt for making a sort of cake which Johnnie likes to have in the house when he comes home from school very hungry, as school-boys almost always are:

MINUTE COOKIES.—One cup of sugar, half a cup each of water and butter, half a tea-spoonful of soda, and enough flour to roll with; roll thin, and bake quickly. These are very easy to make, as they need no eggs.

BESSIE G. P.

And last, though by no means least—indeed, more important than candy or cakes—is a new idea about bread:

BAYONNE, NEW JERSEY.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—Although I am rather an old girl, I always read carefully the letters you publish in your department, and find them, with your remarks thereon, very interesting reading. And I tried Minnie C. W.'s drop-biscuit recipe, and found it so good that I hasten to add my recommendation to hers. Just think of it! excellent light biscuit without shortening, without

paste-board, without roller—of course I mean without the trouble of washing the latter two. And now, if you spare me room, I'll tell the Young Housekeepers how I make bread, which is somewhat in the style of Minnie's biscuits.

Three heaping quarts of sifted flour; one cake of compressed yeast; lukewarm water (into which you may, if you choose, put a lump of butter) enough to mix the flour into a very stiff batter; a heaping tea-spoonful of salt; mix with a large spoon, and beat about two minutes; cover with a thick cloth, and set in a warm place; when raised enough (which will be in from three to three and a half hours, according to my experience), give the batter a brisk stirring, and pour into buttered pans, filling the pans about three-quarters full; when it raises again to the top of the pan, bake in a good oven one hour.

This bread is the sweetest I ever tasted, and I've come to the conclusion that the old-fashioned kneading tends to take the sweetness out of the flour. And it is so easy to make—all done with a spoon. Try it, my young cooks, and report. Take notice, if you please, that the batter must be thick enough to just allow the spoon to stir it. If too thin, there will be a failure. Of course you can try a half or a third of the receipt.

MARGARET EYTINGE.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

SOME QUEER QUESTIONS ON THE MAP.

1. What English town makes good bread?
2. What river in Wales does papa call mamma?
3. What islands describe foolish girls?
4. What town do farmers use?
5. What Scotch town is often burned?
6. What Scotch lake is often boiled in soup?
7. Which lake may be saddled?
8. What English town makes us learned?
9. Which one furnishes the best cream?
10. Which island was found in Eden?
12. Which town would help the navy?
13. Which river is a Spanish title?
14. Which one in Scotland helps to make a doctor?
15. Which one asks a question?
16. What Irish cape tells fortunes?
17. Where do Johnny's clothes go on Mondays?
18. Where does baby go every day?
19. Which town does the good old man carry?
20. What Scotch river do Irish ladies love?
21. Which town does my pretty Susie wear?
22. What English river should be fresh?
23. What Irish town is always light?
24. What cape is ever stormy?
25. What one is always pleasant?
26. What island is full of stars?
27. In which river of England may we land a boat?
28. Which English town is considered a great possession in Eastern countries?
29. Which is the river of Paradise?
30. Which river runs over the desert?

DAME PLAYFAIR.

No. 2.

A DIAMOND.

1. In follow.
2. The whole.
3. To linger for a purpose.
4. A kind of dressgoods.
5. Something made from flax.
6. A number.
7. In follow.

GRETCHEN.

No. 3.

A RIDDLE.

I've seen you where you never were, and where you never will be. And yet within that very place you shall be seen by me. HARRY STILES.

No. 4.

CHARADE.

My first is a color.
My second a church,
My whole is a town,
As you'll find by a search
On the map of the Union.
Who first finds me out
Is a clever young lady
Or lad, without doubt.

L. E. R.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 208.

- No. 1.—1. Pirates, irate, rat, a.
2.—1. Steam, team, tea.
3.—1. Ghost, host.
2. Oscar, scar, car.

No. 2. G O N D O L A
O F F A L
R A G
I

E E L
R E G A L
S W A N S E A

No. 3. Brahmapootra.
No. 4. George. Lemonade.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from Gazette, Ada M. Blakely, Robin Dyke, Leslie Marvin, Rose Reyburn, Johnnie Thorpe, James Edward Carpenter, Gretchen, Istalina Beach, M. A. Benjie, Willie Shirley Peebles, Harry A. Dewey, F. C. Nourse, Amy C. Clarke, Harry Stiles, Edwin Pollock, Sadie B. Negley, Nellie McGuire, Sophia Mason, Ella and James Casey, Edna Starr, Irene Jocelyn, John Botts, Walter Quincy, and J. Powers Lent.

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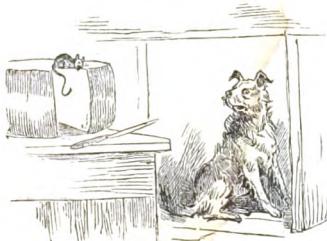
[For Exchanges, see 2d and 3d pages of cover.]

A STORY WITH A STICKY PLOT.

BY MARGARET EYTINGE.

NOW listen, girls, and listen, boys;
A story I will tell
About a curious accident
That once a dog befell—
Likewise his master, master's wife,
And master's boys as well.

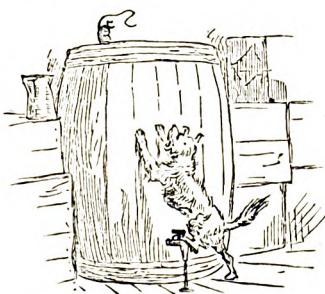
To guard the shop where groceries
For sale his master keeps,
Each night this dog at half past nine
Beneath the counter creeps,
And on a mat spread there for him
With eyes half-open sleeps.



Well, on one night, a chilly night—
And rainy, too, for that—
While sleeping thus, he heard a noise,
And, starting from his mat,
Saw nibbling at a box of cheese
An ancient long-tailed rat.

He gave it chase among the pails,
The firkins, and the kegs;
But much I doubt if many rats
Possess such nimble legs,
For with the greatest speed it sped
O'er butter, lard, and eggs.

At last beside the barrel which
Molasses held he penned
The would-be thief, and proudly barked,
“The chase is at an end,
And soon you'll be the same, I think,
My spry cheese-loving friend.”

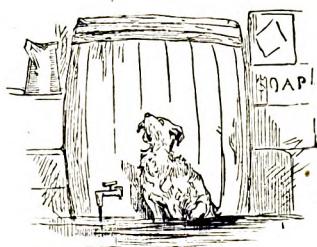


Then up the barrel climbed the rat,
And quickly dropped behind,
And all entreaties to come out
Most prudently declined,
Which so enraged the baffled dog,
He growled and howled and whined.

But finding that no use, he eyed
The cask his prey had skipped;
And then he tried to climb it too,
But on the faucet slipped,
And round it turned, and straight there-
from
The sugary fluid dripped.

It dripped and dripped for hours two,
For hours three and four;
It dripped and dripped until it could
Not drip a driplet more,
And like a dark and sluggish pond
It lay upon the floor.

The poor dog tried to turn and flee,
But, oh, it held him fast,
And in a strife for liberty
The wretched moments passed,
Until his master was aroused
By his loud yells at last.



And down he came in haste (he was
A man quite small and thin)
To learn the cause, so late at night,
Of such a dreadful din;
And learning, kicked off both his shoes,
And promptly waded in.

He seized the dog's hind-legs, and pulled
With all his might and main;
He seized his fore-legs, then his tail,
Then his hind-legs again;
But though he pulled and pulled and
pulled,
His efforts were in vain.



“Oh dear! oh dear! what shall I do?”
He muttered, with a frown,
When up his feet went in the air,
And he sat quickly down,
Just as I've seen—and you, no doubt—
A silly circus clown:



Sat quickly down, but up again,
It seemed, to save his life,
He could not get; and loud he screamed,
In voice shrill as a fife:
“Help! help! help! help! Come here at
once,
My children and my wife.”

Down came the wife (she was quite stout,
But yet she fairly flew).
“What is the matter, dear?” she cried—
“Oh, what is wrong with you?”
And stretching out her hand to him,
She sat down quickly too.

And, running after, came the boys,
To sit down on the floor
In the same way their pa and ma
Had done awhile before.
Oh, 'twas the drollest thing e'er seen
In any grocer's store.



I don't know how they all got free
At last, but I know that
The rat again the barrel climbed,
And on it coolly sat,
And laughed and laughed as never laughed
Another ancient rat.

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THE LOST CITY; OR, THE BOY EXPLORERS IN CENTRAL ASIA. BY DAVID KER.

WHEN Ernest opened his eyes he hardly knew whether he was dreaming or awake. The darkness, the roar, the flames, the raging mob, the domes and minarets of Cabool, had vanished like shadows, and he was lying under the shade of a tent, in a smooth green valley shut in by low hills, upon which the mid-day sun was shining in all its splendor. There was a bandage around his left arm, and another around his head, which ached terribly; and altogether he felt weak and dizzy, as if he had just recovered from a long illness.

He was still gazing round him, when a well-known voice said:

"Awake at last, Ernie? How do you feel now?"

Turning upon his elbow—for he was still too weak to rise—Ernest beheld Tom Hilton lying on the other side of the tent, very pale, and with a strip of blood-stained linen across his forehead, but with the true American look of fearless self-reliance still bright in his sunken eyes.

"Is that you, Tom? Where are we?"

"Talk French, old fellow," answered Tom, in that language. "There's always one man among these fellows who knows English, and he'll be set to watch us, you may be sure. Poor Cavagnari's killed, and all



his men, and we're prisoners. Luckily the Afghans don't know that I understand Pushtu [the language of Afghanistan], and I've gathered from their talk that they belong to an independent hill tribe, over which the Ameer has no power; and now that the fight's done they'd be glad to get home at once, if we didn't hinder 'em."

"We!" echoed Ernest, in amazement. "How's that?"

"Why, it seems that half a dozen of them have been hired to take us alive, I suppose with the idea that we were somebody of consequence, for whom they might get a big ransom. But just as they were slipping away with us, up came a party of the same tribe, who stopped them short, and insisted upon a share of the ransom if there was one. It's never very difficult for six-and-twenty armed men to persuade six, so at last they agreed to camp here, twelve miles from Cabool, until this mysterious 'chief' turns up who hired the fellows that took us, and then it'll be settled what's to be done with us."

"Can it be Sikander who's done it to save our lives?" asked Ernest, quickly.

"I'm afraid not. We'd be all right in *his* hands, but he's told me all about his own tribe, and these fellows don't fit the description at all. However, when he comes we'll soon see whether he's Sikander or not."

"And this 'll be he coming now, I suppose," said Ernest, as a general shout and a tramping of horses' hoofs announced some new arrival in the camp.

The next moment a group of horsemen rode into the open space within the circle of tents, headed by a man whose face our heroes could not see, but whose height and figure certainly reminded them of Sikander. He leaped from his horse and came straight toward the tent. In another instant the prisoners saw scowling down upon them the lean, dark, wolfish face of their Persian enemy Kara Goorg!

In a moment the whole truth burst upon the unhappy boys. Kara Goorg, while obeying the orders of his Russian employers—for they could no longer doubt that his real "mission" in Cabool was to stir up the tumult which had ended so fatally—had gratified his own private hatred by bribing the Afghans to kidnap them in the general confusion. Their attempt to save Cavagnari had made the treacherous design easy, and they were now at the mercy of one to whom mercy was unknown.

"Ha!" cried the Persian, with a mocking grin, speaking in English that Ernest might understand him, "fine Master come low down now, eh? How he like when he get sold for slave? how he like when Tartar whip him with horsewhip, and put out his eyes if he try run away? What Colonel say when he hear his son wash feet of Afghan chief? Fine Master strike 'Persian dog'—but Persian dog turn and bite!"

And he kicked Ernest fiercely in the side.

Such an insult, offered by such a man, roused Ernest's English blood to a pitch of fury which, for the moment, gave him back all his lost strength. He sprang to his feet, and in another instant would have been at the throat of the Persian had not Tom Hilton caught his arm.

Tom's watchful eye had noticed several Afghans standing listening at the tent door, and turning to them, he addressed them in Persian—for even at that critical moment his American shrewdness warned him to conceal his knowledge of their native tongue.

"Sons of the mountain! we are the captives of Afghan warriors, and the shadow of an Afghan's tent should be sacred. Whose dog is this Persian coward that he should dare to lord it among valiant Afghans and good Mussulmans as if their camp were his own? I am the son of a chief and a warrior, whose riches are great and whose hands are open; and if I must die, let me die by the hands of brave Mohammedans, and not be barked to death by a Persian cur whose fathers were slaves to the slaves of *your* fathers."

Tom's skillful allusion to the ancient hatred between Persia and Afghanistan, and his hint about his father's wealth and generosity, were not lost upon his hearers. A murmur of approval followed his words, and Kara Goorg, who had half drawn his Persian dagger, with a growl of fury, which our hero's complimentary remarks fully justified, sheathed it again, and began to look uncomfortable.

And well he might. Ignorant of Tom's knowledge of Persian, he had asserted (in the belief that his prisoners would have no chance of contradicting him) that they were persons of inferior rank, whom he meant to sell for slaves as a punishment for having affronted him. To the Afghans hired to kidnap them the story seemed perfectly natural, and the moderate reward quite sufficient for such a service, while their comrades, in demanding a share of the profits, were actuated rather by a belief that the captives were likely to fetch a good price than by any suspicion of their real rank.

But now the tables were turned. The kidnappers learned for the first time that they had been cheated (and that, too, by a Persian), while their companions discovered that the prize in their hands was much more valuable than they had supposed. Neither discovery boded good to Kara Goorg's plans, and that worthy thought it high time to cut the conversation short.

"Why should these dogs laugh at the beards of Afghan warriors, and make them eat dirt?" he cried. "Do we not know that lies run from an unbeliever's tongue like water from a burst water-skin, and that every rogue will boast himself a descendant of many princes, though in his own land he is but a porter or a seller of figs. The sun is sinking, and I have far to go. Ho! Badja [children], carry forth these sons of burned fathers, and bind them upon your horses."

But as his attendants outside came forward to obey, the Afghan chief—a handsome young giant of six feet three, with hair and eyes as black as the loose trousers of embroidered velvet which he wore below his snow-white tunic and crimson sash—haughtily waved them back.

"Is it not said," he observed, in a slightly mocking tone, "that 'hurry belongs to Shaitaun'? [the Evil One]. Why is our Persian guest in such haste to depart? His words are as wise as those of Lokman the Sage; but would porters or fruit-sellers tempt us to keep them prisoners in the hope of a ransom (and perhaps to kill them in our wrath at being balked of it), when they might go free at once by proclaiming who they are?"

The Persian's jaw dropped at this shrewd retort, and a lurking grin flickered over the grave faces of the Afghan warriors.

"That chief wasn't born on the 1st of April—that's a fact," chuckled Tom, translating the speech to Ernest: "he's been there before."

"But why not tell them at once that Sikander's our friend?"

"Not much. These hill tribes are always quarrelling, and Sikander may have killed this man's father, for all we know. Gently's the word."

Meanwhile the young chief called up one of his men who had served for some time among the Russians at Tashkent, and questioned Tom in his presence as to his father's name, rank, friends, and personal appearance. Tom's answers were frankly given, and confirmed by the Afghan soldier. Another man, who had picked up a little English, was then sent to question Ernest, whose answers tallied exactly with those of his friend. The evidence against Kara Goorg was complete.

But the Persian was not the man to lose both his plunder and his revenge without resistance, and he resolved to try the effect of a little bullying.

"These prisoners are mine," cried he, "and I am not one upon whose beard every rogue may throw dust. Let those

who wrong me dread the wrath of the Ameer and the vengeance of the Oorooso" (Russians).

"The shadow of the Ameer's throne only covers Cabool," replied the young warrior, scornfully; "it is not long enough to reach our mountains. As for the Russians, if they want our prisoners, let them come and take them; and as for thyself, know that he who threatens Ahmed Khan doth but cast fire-brands into the lair of a tiger."

The last words, uttered in a fierce tone, completely cowed the blustering Persian, who was still hesitating how to answer, when Ahmed Khan kindly saved him the trouble.

"Thou hast come hither in treachery, but a guest's life is sacred with Afghan warriors. Begone in safety, and thank Allah that we are not traitors like thee!"

This was a settler. The traitor had no wish to encounter with his eight men thirty-two well-armed Afghans, and sneaked away, glaring back over his shoulder with a look that haunted Ernest's dreams for many a night after.

Meanwhile, at a sign from the chief, one of his men brought our heroes a large bowl of coffee, which, thirsty and feverish as they were, was very refreshing. But no sooner had they swallowed it than they both fell fast asleep.

That night an Afghan goat-herd, lying rolled up in his sheep-skin *pooshteen* (cloak) among the crags that overhung a steep rocky pass in the hills bordering the Cabool plain on the northeast, was aroused from his nap by a tramping of horses' hoofs, and saw a long train of armed horsemen filing through the gorge. In the midst of the band was a led-horse, with a kind of overgrown pannier slung on either side, and a human figure half sitting, half lying in it. The goat-herd naturally took these strange riders for wounded men; but they were really our two heroes, still sleeping soundly from the effects of the drugged coffee, by which simple device Ahmed Khan had saved them the fatigue of the journey, and himself the trouble of looking after them.

When the boys opened their eyes again they beheld another change of scene quite as startling as the former. The green plains had disappeared, and now mountains upon mountains rose up against the sky far as the eye could reach, bare, stony, lifeless, unrelieved by tree or bush, their countless clefts gaping like thirsty mouths under the blistering glare of the sun.

All this was seen through the one narrow gateway or rather gap in one of those huge gray walls of dried mud twenty-five or thirty feet high so common in Central Asia. This wall, which was nearly circular, inclosed a considerable space, over which were scattered broadcast, without any attempt at arrangement, a number of little box-shaped clay hovels, with flat roofs and low, narrow doorways. In the midst of these the Afghan band were just dismounting from their horses, while a score or so of women in long blue mantles, the folds of which almost hid their faces, were unsaddling and rubbing down the beasts, or lighting fires to cook the evening meal. Altogether, what with the glittering arms and prancing horses, the strange dresses and swarthy visages, the huge dark wall in the background, and the bright blue sky over all, this robber village made a very effective picture.

Half a dozen children, brown and shaggy as forest monkeys, had already come scrambling out to meet their fathers, and one grim old warrior, whose scarred features looked just like a railway map, was dandling a little round-faced baby on his brawny shoulder.

"See that old boy petting the baby," cried Ernest. "He must be a good sort anyhow."

"Must he?" said Tom, with a queer smile. "Do you know what I heard him say just now? 'These two Christian dogs shot my brother in the fight at Cabool, and the first chance I get I mean to kill them both.'"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CHIMNEYS: THEIR HISTORY.

CHIMNEYS seem so natural to us that we forget that there was a time when they were unknown. They were invented about the same time with clocks and watches. No house in ancient Rome or Athens had them. The Greeks and Romans heated their rooms with hot coals in a dish, or by flues underneath the floor. The smoke passed out by the doors and windows. You could always tell when a Roman was about to give a dinner party by the clouds of smoke that came out of the kitchen windows. It must have been very unpleasant for the cooks, who had to do their work in the midst of it.

The tall chimneys that rise over the tops of the houses in New York and Brooklyn, pouring out their clouds of smoke, would have seemed miracles to our ancestors a few centuries ago. Even the pipe of a steamer or the chimney of a kerosene lamp they would have thought wonderful. In England, in the time of the Conqueror (1066), the fire was built on a clay floor or in a hole or pit in the largest room of the house. The smoke passed through an opening in the roof. At night a cover was placed over the coals. Everybody was by law obliged to cover up his fire when the bell rang at a certain hour. In French this was *couverfeu*, and hence the word "curfew" bell.

Chimneys began to be used generally in England in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. No one knows who invented them, or when they first came into use. We find them first in Italy. In Venice they seem to have been not uncommon as early as 1347. In 1368 they had long been in use at Padua. They were at first built very wide and large, so that they could be easily cleaned. The wide chimney-pieces of some of our older houses are very curious.

But as time passed on chimneys were made taller, narrower, and often crooked. When they had to be cleaned it was customary to send boys up into them to remove the soot and ashes. It was then that the saddest stories were told of the little sweeps who were forced to climb up the narrow flues, and come down torn, bleeding, and covered with soot. These poor creatures, who were often not more than seven or eight years old, were sometimes suffocated in the foul chimneys they attempted to clean. When they reached the top they were expected to look out and give a loud shout. No boy would ever become a chimney-sweep from choice, and they were often driven to climb the chimneys by the fear of a whipping. The cruelty of the master-sweeps was fearful.

The little chimney-sweeper has passed away. His place is taken by a patent broom and a colored operator. Chimneys are built two and three hundred feet high. In Birmingham, England, one fell down recently on a large factory, killing and wounding thirty or forty workmen and others. The tallest chimney in New York is that of the Steam-heating Company.

The chimney is one of the most useful of inventions. We can not well understand how the Greeks and Romans did without it. But with us it is everywhere. Our lamps would never burn without a chimney; our steamboats and engines would be helpless without it; our factories are moved by it; it warms our houses, and gives employment to thousands of people.

In the days before chimneys were invented men lived in clouds of smoke. The walls of the finest palaces in ancient Rome were soon covered with soot and filth. It was impossible to keep them clean. The mosaics and the paintings on the walls soon became discolored. In the castles of England and France it was still worse. Here the huge fire blazed in the centre of the great hall. The smoke covered the roof with black drapery, and the savage knights and squires were forced either to endure the cold, or to live and breathe in an air that was dangerous to sight, health, and life itself.



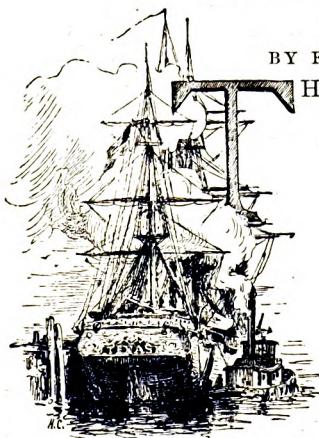
TWO SISTERS.*

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

IF either of these little girls
In heart or household were the pet,
I think it was the pearl of pearls,
The little dancing Harriet.
The painter drew their portraits well,
As fresh and bright as morning dew;
And still we feel the magic spell
Of tossing curls and eyes of blue.
Almost a hundred years ago,
A hundred years of dust and dreams,
They tripped so gayly to and fro.
Ah me! how very strange it seems!
And think, through all the changing hours
Of all these rolling weeks and years,
The little hands have held their flowers,
The rare blue eyes have shed no tears.

ROBIN ADAIR.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.



HE ship *Texas*, with the tow-boat alongside all ready to take her to sea, lay at the end of Lewis's Wharf, Boston. All that Captain Stearns and his officers, with the pilot, were waiting for was the arrival of the crew, who, of course, would not come aboard till the last moment.

Doddridge—known as "Dod" Billings—a strongly built, bright-faced young fellow of fifteen, was standing in the door of the "boy's

room," a tiny apartment at the after or rear end of the forward house.

* This beautiful little picture is copied from a miniature by the English artist Cosway. The portraits are those of Lady Georgiana Dorothy and Lady Harriet Elizabeth Cavendish, daughters of William, fifth Duke of Devonshire. The little folk were born in 1783 and 1785.

He was whistling softly to himself, his thoughts being divided between the parting with his mother and father in their "down East" home a couple of days before, and a little natural self-congratulation that after having made two successive voyages as "boy" with Captain Stearns, he was to now rate as ordinary seaman at eighteen dollars a month.

"I wonder what that young chap wanted with Captain Stearns?" he thought, as a slender, pale-faced youth came out of the cabin. After looking about him in a bewildered sort of way, the boy finally spoke to Dod.

"Will you direct me to—the—"boy's room," please?" asked the new-comer, who was dressed in a very new and sailorish suit of blue. His voice was pleasant, but rather hesitating and low.

"This is it," answered Dod, briefly, with a backward nod of his head.

"That—*closet!*" exclaimed the other, glancing up at Dod, as though not sure that he could really be in earnest.

Dod, who began to suspect the truth, preserved a provoking silence.

"I am Robin Adair," continued the other, knitting his brows, "and I thought, if I shipped as 'boy,' I could be alone by myself, separate from the—the common sailors."

Robin had not the slightest intention of saying anything offensive, but Dod flashed up at once.

"I'm a 'common sailor,' but Captain Stearns told me that I could keep my berth in the boy's room another voyage, and I mean to, too," he added, with unnecessary force.

"Oh, very well, it does not matter much," was the reply, in a manner that Dod took to mean that it *did* matter considerably. And swelling with inward anger, he looked on while Robin dragged a small sea chest and some bedding—all very new—to the room, and proceeded, awkwardly enough, to stow them away.

"What possessed Captain Stearns to ship *that* useless specimen, and for a winter passage, too, *I don't see*," grumbled Dod, who, himself one of those exceptional boys known as "born sailors," had a secret contempt for any one aspiring to be a sailor who had white hands and a delicate complexion. For Dod, who was one of the best-natured fellows in the world, had learned to grumble a little, as became his profession, yet his heart was always in the right place.

But in the arrival of the crew, and the bustle and confusion of getting under way, the new-comer and his affairs quite passed from his mind.

Occasionally in the scurry and confusion of making sail, Dod had a glimpse of luckless Robin being hustled hither and thither by the busy crew, or heard him scolded sharply, for some small sin, by Mr. Briggs, the active young second mate. But it was not until the decks were cleared up and the watches chosen that Dod had any chance to exchange speech with his new room-mate.

And then the speech seemed to be all on one side. For Robin, who was naturally shy and quiet, was beginning to be a little seasick and a great deal homesick, and only replied in the briefest manner to Dod's friendly questioning. That he had lived in the country, and never was at sea before, was all that Dod could discover, and mentally deciding that Mr. Robin Adair was "putting on airs," Dod determined to let him severely alone until his reserve should wear off.

No one can imagine the terrible misery that the first fortnight at sea brought to the delicately nurtured, shy, sensitive boy. It would have been bad enough in the finest weather to have endured the coarse jokes of the sailors and the sharp scolding of the officers, but when, added to these, was a continuation of gales that almost invariably make up a midwinter passage across the Atlantic, the situation of poor Rob, entirely unused to anything like hardship or exposure, was really pitiable. And then, too, there was no one to whom he could unburden himself, for he mistook Dod's curt speech for gruffness, just

as Dod took his silence for sullenness; so the two went on mutually misunderstanding each other, just as many older people have done, and will do until the end of time.

One night, after four terrible hours spent aloft in shortening sail amid terrible squalls, with cutting sleet and hail that made ropes like wire and canvas like oak boards, the port watch was sent below, with the significant warning to "stand ready for a call."

Tired, exhausted, and wet to the skin, the two boys entered the room, Rob heart-sick and sore, Dod sleepy and out of sorts. Scarcely had they pulled to the door, when the latter began:

"I say, Adair, why don't you do something besides hang on and shiver when we're aloft stowing the topsails? I have to pick up my share of the yard-arm and yours too. What a coward you are aloft!"

"I know it, but I can't help it," was the answer, in a low, dispirited tone that went straight to Dod's heart, though he was too stubborn to let it be seen. Yet if Rob had spoken again, Dod would have "taken it all back," as he told himself. But Rob, removing his wet oil-skin in silence, crawled into his bunk, with every bone in him twingeing like the toothache.

Thinking how uncommonly comfortable the little stived-up room, with its wet, sloppy floor, and its two berths full of damp bedding, looked, when lit up by the jangling tin lamp, as contrasted with the darkness and cold without, Dod got into his own bunk, boots and all, knowing that before long they would be called out again, for the voice of the storm was waxing fiercer and fiercer, while the terrible rolling and pitching of the ship told of an increasing wind and sea.

Insensibly Dod's thoughts travelled home and motherward, as those of every true boy are sure to do at such times.

"If this sort of thing makes *me* feel bad," muttered Dod, drawing a wet sleeve hastily across his eyes, "how must Rob feel? What a pig I've been, anyway!" Leaning over the edge of his berth as he thus communed with himself, he gently touched the shoulder of his room-mate, who was lying with his face buried in his pillow.

"A little homesick, eh, old fellow?" he said, in a tone of such kindly interest that Rob, starting suddenly up, seized his hand in both his own with a fervor that considerably surprised his more practical companion.

"Oh, if you only knew—" he began, when his further speech was abruptly checked by a great thumping at the door, accompanied by a gruff,

"Turn out here 'n' shorten sail!"

"Never mind," said Dod, springing lightly from his berth, feeling his heart growing very warm and tender toward the homesick boy; "there's nothing now to do but heave the old ship to, and then we'll get a whole watch below—a thing we haven't had for thirty-six hours."

Oh, the discomfort, the misery, of blundering out on

deck in the darkness of a December night, with a terrible gale shrieking and howling through the straining rigging!—a gale laden with alternate squalls of sleet and hail. Overhead, the partly clewed-up topsails are slanting against the yards with thunderous force; under-foot the reeling, heaving deck is drenched with green sea, while the great ship herself goes tearing on over the tempest-tossed ocean, as though driven by the fiends of the storm. But everything pleasant or unpleasant must have an end, and after a long struggle with the stiffened canvas and a vast amount of yard-bracing, the Texan hove to under the snuggest possible canvas, began laboriously climbing the mountainous seas as they rose before her.

It was the starboard watch that was sent below after all was snug, and Dod, drawing Rob nearer to him, stood huddled under the lee of the hatch-house for such shelter as it might give them.

"Two hours longer of wet and cold," said Rob, through his chattering teeth, "and then—"

"Hold on—all—for your lives!"

Hardly had the ringing order risen above the din of the storm when a towering wall of black water, meeting the uprisingship with irresistible force, crashed in on deck, sweeping everything before it.

Throwing one arm about the waist of his companion, who was helpless with fear, Dod attempted to seize one of the stanchions supporting the "gallows" where the boats were lashed; but he was too late.

The wild torrent, which for the moment threw the ship nearly on her beam ends, swept the two boys away and outboard as though they had been straws. But from the lee pin-rail, which was completely under water, the foot and main braces were at the same moment washed to leeward in tangled, straggling coils. The two boys were held for one strange second between the outgoing and incoming wave. Dod still clung to his half-insensible companion when he felt the touch of a rope across his face.



"HE FELT THE TOUCH OF A ROPE ACROSS HIS FACE."

To seize it with the strength of despair, and guide the hand of his companion to this hope of safety, was the work of an instant. And then, as the *Texas* loomed dim and phantom-like through the darkness above them, the reflex or incoming wave swept them back with lightning speed almost to the ship's rail, and in another moment the two, drenched, numbed, and half drowned, were hauled in-board by a score of willing hands.

The ship *Texas*, looking rather battered and storm-beaten, was lying in Bramley Moore Dock some two weeks later. Captain Stearns was in his cabin, and with him a tall, handsomely dressed gentleman, who had followed the old ship by steam-power, and arrived in port some time before her. He was walking nervously to and fro as he listened intently to Captain Stearns, who had narrated, far better than I have done, the story just told.*

"It was a narrow shave for the youngsters, General Rogers," Captain Stearns was saying, "though once, in the old ship *Kentucky*, I had three men washed from deck while lying to in a gale off Hatteras, and the 'reflex wave,' as they call it, *actually swept two of them fairly back over the rail*, inboard, ten seconds later. The third, poor fellow, was lost. You would have been amused to have seen Robin and young Billings hang together for the rest of the voyage," continued Captain Stearns, returning to his original topic. "Why, they were like two brothers. Dod did his best to learn Rob a little sailorizing, but it was no use."

"I'm glad of it," was the answer, "for after this Rob will love his home all the better. There are only Robin and myself left," continued General Rogers, rather sadly, "and it was a great shock to me when my boy took this fancy to try a sea-faring life."

"But if anything *had* happened," said Captain Stearns.

"I should not have blamed you," quickly answered the General; "and so I felt, when I informed you that I had found out from the lady of the house where he was lodging that he was going to pay you a visit in the morning, and requested you to ship him at once. I sailed for Liverpool three days after the *Texas* left, and I can not tell you how I have watched and waited for the ship's arrival."

A sudden knock at the door startled them.

"Come in," called Captain Stearns, with a meaning smile at the General.

General Rogers slipped into the Captain's state-room, leaving the door ajar. Enter Dod and Robin, looking rather embarrassed.

"Well, boys, what is it?" asked Captain Stearns, pleasantly.

Robin looked at Dod, who cleared his throat.

"If you please, sir," said Dod, twisting his cap nervously in his fingers, "Robin—hem—thinks he won't go another voyage, and won't you advance him money enough to pay his passage back to Boston in the steerage, and take it out of my advance wages; he'll pay me some day, when we get back to the States."

"What do you want to go home for, Robin?" asked Captain Stearns, in a voice of affected wonder; "you're not tired of a sailor's life already, I hope?"

"I want to tell father how *very, very* wicked I was to leave such a good home," returned Rob, in a low voice, "and to ask him to forgive me."

"It's all right, Rob; I think you've learned your lesson," said a familiar voice, at the sound of which Rob gave a great cry, and rushed into his father's arms, after the most approved method laid down in story-books.

When Dod Billings came home after the next voyage he displayed to the admiring eyes of friends and school-

mates a remarkably handsome gold hunting-case chronometer, on which was engraved:

PRESENTED TO DODDRIDGE BILLINGS,

As a reward for kindness and a tribute to heroism,

BY HIS FRIENDS

GENERAL J. G. ROGERS, U.S.A., AND ROBIN ADAIR ROGERS.

When he again returned from a longer voyage—this time as second mate of the *Texas*—he found hanging in his room an oil-painting representing the ship *Texas* hove to in a gale of wind, in one corner of which was the artist's name, but not in full—"Robin Adair."* And I hardly know which of the two gifts he values the most.

OUR OLD-FASHIONED PARTIES.

BY LUCY C. LILLIE.

THE other day a young lady of about eleven years of age, who is one of my particular friends, showed me an invitation she had just received to a party. The hours were from eight to twelve, and what weighed most on my little friend's mind was the question of her toilet, for she was to have a new dress of pink silk foulard for the occasion, and it seemed to me as though in her anxiety concerning this all chance of honest, downright fun in the anticipation and in the frolic itself was lost.

Perhaps there was something dreamy in the air that day; perhaps it was because my little friend's aunt, to whom I was talking, reminded me by a few chance words of very dear old times; perhaps it was just because we were all circled about a cozy fire with a little five-o'clock-tea-table before us and a gentle spirit had diffused itself. But for one or all these reasons my friend and I began to talk of the parties we used to go to, nearly twenty years ago—parties in "our street"—and one by one the children gathered about us, and we had to go on always telling "more."

It used to seem to me as if we had always lived in "our street"—all of us who played together, for, singular to say, in our recollection no one had moved, so that we knew every child very intimately. We had no mysteries from each other except on the subject of parties. We each gave one party every winter, and it was an understood thing that a certain degree of secrecy, a flavor, as it were, of mystery, was allowable.

We could not exactly say *how* or *why*, but there was always *something* in the manner and air of the girl who was going to give a party which made us suspicious, and when we came out in the afternoon to play, we watched such a one with a feeling half of admiration, half of awe, and would exchange whispers on the subject when she was not present, each giving an opinion as to whether it really was or was *not* likely that she intended to give a party. I remember once, after watching one of the girls in our street three days in this manner, and observing she had *just* the very precise way and manner of a girl who had "party" on her mind, it turned out that she was only going away to the funeral of a distant relation. We never quite trusted that girl after that. Her name was Phoebe, and, unreasoning as it may seem, I never could thoroughly like the name since.

Well, it was always the case that the day the invitations were sent out, the girl who was to give the party never came out to play. We had certain understood rules of etiquette, you see, and this was one of them. It was always taken for granted that the other children wanted to talk it over, and it would be embarrassing to do so in our hostess's presence. For this purpose we always assembled on the steps of what was known as the "empty

* This incident, with the exception of an entire change of names, is strictly true, as, indeed, are the leading features of this story.—F. H. C.

house," for in our recollection no one had lived in it, and as it had a stone portico and five wide steps, and seats each side of the portico, we thought it a "lovely" place to sit and talk in.

The houses in our street were of different kinds and sizes, and I presume the incomes of the different households varied considerably; but it never made the least difference to us in those days who was rich or who was poor. We never expected any splendor or any show at any one's party; and while we knew in a general way, for instance, that the R—s never had a great many dishes for supper, nor any special entertainments, and perhaps Mr. R— was poor, we never thought of criticising the R—s' parties, but looked forward to them with special delight, because on such occasions we always went up to Grandmamma R—'s room, and were allowed to look over her treasures.

The M—s, we knew, gave the finest entertainments of our street, but still they never violated those unwritten laws of ours which decreed that all parties should begin at half past 4 P.M., and be ended by 9.30 or, at latest, 10 P.M., and that games should come in a certain order, and the boys be made to stay with the girls, and *not* go off by themselves.

The invitations were always written on gilt-edged note-paper—only the other day I was looking at one of them—and they came in very highly glazed gilt-edged envelopes, and ran as follows:

Misses Katie and May M— request the pleasure of your company on Thursday, January 10, from 4 to half past 9 P.M.

R. S. V. P.

We were all very particular about that R. S. V. P., which I suppose all girls to-day know means *Répondez, s'il vous plaît* (Reply, if you please), and were quite in a flutter until the replies had been sent, and we took a keen delight in watching the windows of the hostess's house when our messenger was sent over. Nothing but severe illness ever prevented us from accepting. Mumps or measles was an excuse, but oh! with what sad effect upon our street! It was an awful thing not to go to a party, and what a delightful thing to go!

We nearly all wore curls in those days, so that that morning everybody's hair was always in papers. Those very papers had a fascination for me, and it was *so* interesting to see them unrolled, and find out how each curl came out. We never had any afternoon lessons such days, but directly after the school-room dinner we were told to lie down for an hour.

At about three o'clock we were roused from these delights by the entrance of our nurse with the clean starched muslins, our silk stockings and slippers and ribbons. These were duly put on, and over them our Red-Riding-hood cloaks; all children had these cloaks then. Then we were taken to the scene of entertainment. We never minded walking down the street thus attired. Everybody understood it.

Arrived at the house, we always ran up quickly to the dressing-room. I can see that at the M—s' house very clearly now—a large solemn-looking room, with a bed draped in lace, and a French dressing-table with soft lace and silk hangings, and a long mirror in which we could see our small selves comfortably from top to toe. One agony was always in store for us—one, happily, not known to the children of to-day. My sister and I on such occasions always became horribly, painfully, madly, conscious that our hair was *red*, that the long thick curls hanging down to our waists were almost a disgrace. Red hair in those days was considered a calamity, and the fact of possessing it made us painfully self-conscious the first few moments we were in the drawing-room. I can remember on one occasion the shiver with which I heard a lady say to our hostess's mamma: "Oh, those children with the *red*

hair are the little—s, aren't they? Dear me!" Perhaps the "dear me" did not mean what I fancied it did, but it struck like a damp chill upon my joy that afternoon.

We always played games as soon as the party was assembled, the first being, as a rule, "Oats, peas, beans," a game the words of which I always supposed, and so I am sure did many another in our street, were but one word, "Oatsbriesbeens"; and as this was followed by

"And barley grows
Where you, nor I, nor nobody knows,"

I grew to be a great girl before I gave up the idea that "oatsbriesbeens" was a curious vegetable, hard to find, but still a known product of the land I lived in. We next had "Pillows and keys," and then "Little Sally Waters," and with intervals of conversation and looking at the stereoscope, etc., this led to supper-time, when a march was always played on the piano.

We not only marched solemnly to the dining-room two and two, but also around and around the table twice or thrice before taking our places. Do the little girls I know now like hot biscuits, and preserves, and waffles, and cold chicken, and turkey, and fried oysters, I wonder, at their parties? We did, I know, and this repast, wholesome in kind and bountiful in supply, was always provided for us about six o'clock. Then we returned to the parlor for more games and dancing.

There were always a great many boys who didn't want to dance, and some who didn't know how. The former were artfully coaxed, and the latter given into the hands of some little girl who knew enough to pilot them through the Lanciers, or what was always known as the "quadrille." Then we danced the Esmeralda, and then the Varsovienne and the Danish dance, and then the schottische and the polka.

Nobody knew how to waltz then. The girls danced with each other, or with the boys, just as it happened, and I can say every dance was enjoyed, from the first step to the last. In the Lanciers, *how* we enjoyed the marching figure! The old-fashioned music one never hears now was always played for the Lanciers then everywhere, and the strain which opened *that* figure used to seem to us the most beautiful of harmonies. In the quadrille I think we liked best the *visiting figure*, where one always gave the left hand to the right of her partner. There was a curious fascination about the little *twirl* we took in returning to our own places.

A boy named Towsey in our street always did that so nicely that we all wanted to dance as his *vis-à-vis*, and one time he said: "See here, I think it's real mean of you girls to make such a fuss about that," and for a month at least we were all horribly ashamed. We felt as if Towsey must think us so rude and forward; and it was no comfort even when Katie M— said one day: "Well, I don't see as Towsey's such *dreadful* importance anyway," though it did clear the air a little to have such an opinion boldly expressed.

We always had one or two sitting-down games—"Stage-Coach" and "Going to Jerusalem" being unfailingly popular with the boys, while "Post-office" was better liked by the girls. At some houses they had magic-lanterns, and our eldest brother always came down at our house and did tricks, but I think we liked the ordinary routine of games and dances best.

At nine o'clock we again went down to the dining-room, this time for ice-cream and lemonade and cake, and after that came the announcements of the maids and nurses, the scramble into our wraps, the fervent though sleepy good-byes, the peals of laughter from the boys' dressing-room—they always seemed to fight over *their* things those boys—and the going out into the winter starlight, happy, excited, thrilled, and just touched by vague sorrow that it was over, and so home and to bed and asleep before ten o'clock.



"PILLOWS AND KEYS."

The boys gave parties equally with the girls, but we girls never thought them *quite* as nice, and perhaps our slight contempt was felt at last, because I remember one terrible occasion. There was a boy in the corner house who was known to have his own way about everything, and it became apparent one February that he meant to give a party. High were our hopes, and Eddie W— was eagerly observed. Imagine, then, the disgust and disappointment of the street when the invitations were sent out to *our brothers only!*

In the whole history of the street, in the oldest girl's remembrance, such a thing had never been heard of, and it was clear that there was nothing to do but to treat the whole affair with silent contempt, and so we never condescended to make the least inquiry as to that exclusive entertainment, about which I am to this day ignorant. The one only item concerning it in which we took *any* apparent interest was the fact that midway in the evening some boys who were called the "Fourth Avenue roughs" made their appearance, claiming that Eddie had invited them, and only took their leave after a scrimmage with the other guests. Katie M— reported confidentially that Mr. W— had said to *her* father that it was the *last* party Eddie ever should have. I believe we concluded after this to restore him to our favor, but we never alluded to his party; and if he had wished to humiliate us, he must have felt disappointed.

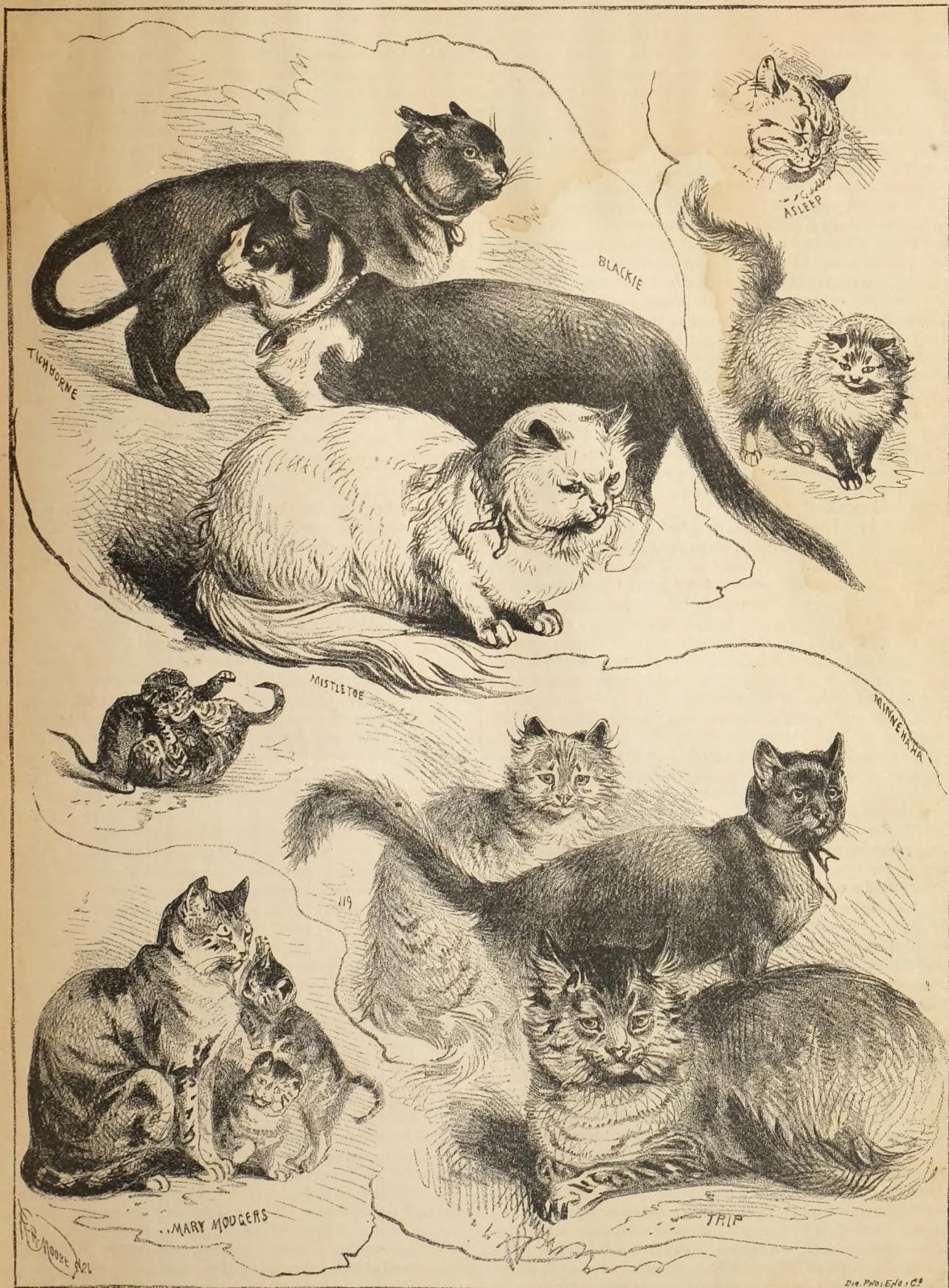
Such, with slight variations, were the parties in our

street twenty years ago. I wonder how they would impress the young people I so dearly love to-day. How would the early hours, the simple fare, the plain little toilets, the happy, careless dancing, and old-fashioned games please them? I know that I look back with gratitude and delight to the entertainments of those childish days, which never wearied, never overexcited, never produced discontent or false ideas and ambitions, but were only joyous hours in simple lives of genuine children.

OUR PET PUSSY CATS.

WHAT would life be to little folk without pets? Very dull and commonplace, would it not? And where is there a more delightful pet to be found than puss? On the following page our artist has given us a group of pet pussy cats, and how soft and sleek they are, with their warm fur and bright eyes! Not one shows a claw. Blackie and Mistletoe, Minnehaha and Trip, who would imagine they could ever get angry, and snarl and bite? But then everybody, even cats, are always on their good behavior when they are having their pictures taken.

Puss has been a pet ever since we have known anything about the world. Yet whence she came, and what nation first tamed her and made her a household friend, nobody knows. Digitized by Google



Nothing whatever is really known about the origin of the domestic cat. When, where, and how it became domesticated not the most learned naturalists can say. You may read about the animal in half a dozen dead languages, and you may find it sculptured on the stone remains and on the various other monuments of all the cities and nations of the past. A book might be written on the cats of ancient Egypt. Darwin says the animal existed long before man. Perhaps, as Dr. Gorden Stable suggests, if this be the case, "it was the cat which first domesticated man."

A belief is held by some naturalists that the "tabby" of our firesides comes from the wild mountain cat; but there are certain differences between the wild and the domestic cat, notably in the form of the tail, which seem to point to the fact that our pussy is not a relative of the original wild cat. It is not altogether improbable that the Egyptian cat is the real ancestor of our domestic species.

The classification of the domestic cat may be made with every share of reason as follows: Of the short-haired species, five primary varieties—tortoise-shell, black, white, blue or slate-color, and the tabbies; of the long-haired, or Asiatic, no division has been attempted, nor would such division be of practical value in the present state of cat-fancying. The European cats are further divided into secondary varieties as follows: Tortoise-shell pure; tortoise-shell and white; black; pure black and white; blue pure, and blue and white, tabbies; red, brown, blue and silver, and spotted.

Cats are credited with the greatest number of bad qualities. They have been said to be false, treacherous, cruel, ungrateful, spiteful, and, what is perhaps worse than all, thieves. In this last respect they have often been slandered, as in the case of the unfortunate lodging-house cat supposed to have taken two bottles of vinegar, half a dozen lemons, and a pound of sugar! One redeeming quality it is admitted to possess, and that is the love of home. Indeed, so strong is this instinct in cats that it has been stated that the unearthly sounds heard at dead of night, when puss and his friends meet on their rambles on the fences, is but the bewailing of their short absence from home; that they then give vent to their feelings in their peculiar version of "Home, sweet Home." It is difficult, however, to distinguish that touching melody amidst the variations.

Still, pussy possesses some good qualities. Cats will often show a very strong personal attachment, and they themselves are often warmly beloved by their owners. Mohammed's cat must have made herself beloved by her master in no common degree, for the Prophet cut off the sleeve of his garment rather than disturb the repose of his favorite, which had fallen asleep on it. Petrarch was so fond of his cat, and it showed such affection for him, that he had it embalmed after death, and placed in a niche of his apartment.

It is a well-known fact that a cat will have such a love for a kind mistress, as to intrust the care of its kittens to her and her alone. An instance of this kind happened but a short time ago. A lady had a beautiful cat, from its color known as Whitey. Whitey had three very beautiful kittens; but before these pretty creatures saw the light of day the original owner of Whitey gave her away to a lady who lived some little distance off. Her old mistress was sitting in her drawing-room one day, when a well-known "meow" caused her to look up from her work. There was Whitey, with a kitten in her mouth, which she carefully deposited in the lady's lap, and with another plaintive "meow," which seemed to say, "Just take care of him till I come back," went off in search of the rest, which one by one were brought over and placed, according to Whitey's notions, in safe-keeping. When Whitey's new owner came to know what had been going on, she procured the return of the kittens, and they were sent back,

but the mother had clearly made up her mind on the point, and the next day brought them all back again.

That cats have the means of communicating ideas one to another seems possible, and a story told by the Rev. J. G. Wood would seem to show it. He says that a friend of his had two cats, which were kept in a wine-cellar; one was an old cat and the other a young one. The older cat had a fondness for mice, but, from age and weakness, was unable to capture many. In this difficulty a bargain seems to have been made between the two, and the young one would frequently present the older animal with fresh-caught mice, and always receive a share of the older cat's meat in return.

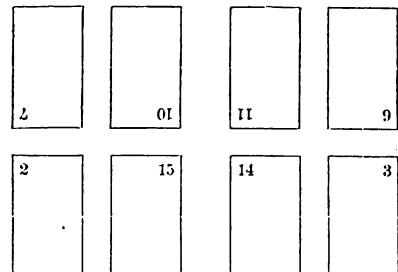
That pussy will always be highly regarded as a household pet there can be no doubt. The interest felt in her is shown by the cat shows held both here and abroad. The one recently given in Boston was a most successful affair. People of all classes sent their pets, and attended the exhibition themselves. Prizes were distributed, and as much honor done to the inmates of the various cages as if they had been rare curiosities from remote parts of the world, and not the commonplace associates of our daily lives, at home in our kitchens, taking their meals from our hands, and enjoying cozy naps on our hearth-rugs.

AMATEUR BOOK-BINDING.

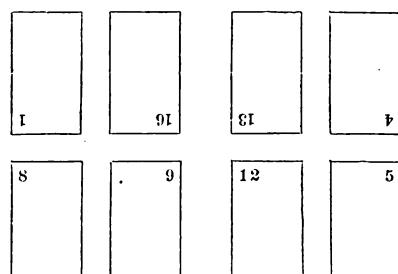
BY C. H. V.

SOME of our readers have asked us to teach them a simple method of binding books so that they can do it without the aid of machinery or costly tools.

They are probably aware that when the material of a book comes from the hand of the printer it consists of a number of large sheets that are commonly twenty inches long and fifteen broad. Eight pages of the book are printed on each side of a sheet in such a peculiar order that when the sheet is properly folded the pages will be correctly arranged by the numbering. To see how this is, take a sheet of paper that measures fifteen inches by twenty. With a ruler and pencil draw lines across the sheet so as to divide it into eight equal parts. Each of these parts is a page. Number them thus:



Now turn the sheet over, and number the pages on this side in this way:



Now to fold the sheet, lay it on the table with the side up that has on it 2, 15, etc.; bring page 3 over upon page 2, creasing the sheet in the middle. Then the four pages lying upward will be numbered 4, 13, 12, 5. Bring page 5 over on page 4, and crease in the middle again. Pages 8

and 9 will now lie upward. Fold 9 over on 8, and the sheet will be folded as it should be, and is now called a signature. In a book there may be 20, 30, or more such signatures, which are numbered so that the binder will know in what order to place them. These numbers are placed at the bottom of the first page in each signature.

There will next be required two pieces of wooden board of the size of the pages, or about a quarter of an inch longer and wider, just as the cover of the book is a little larger than the pages. These boards are to be used as a press, the folded sheets being laid evenly between them, but with the edges on the folded sides extending out beyond the sides of the boards about one-eighth of an inch. The whole is then squeezed tightly together by two screw clamps such as carpenters use.

While still in the press, from four to seven saw-marks, according to the size of the book, are made in the back of the sheets. The middle ones are to contain pieces of strong twine, which hold the book together. The cuts on either end are what are termed the kettle-stitch cuts, or where the thread is fastened at either end of the book after having passed round the band.

The next part of the work is to sew the folded sheets together, attaching them at the same time to short pieces of strong twine stretched across them at the back. To do

this a wooden frame is needed to hold the twines in their proper place during the sewing. In the diagram the dotted lines are the twines which are fastened to the upper and lower parts of the frame.

They are set up to conform to the saw marks which have just been made in the back of the sheets. The kettle-stitch cuts are shown in the diagram. The clamps and boards are now taken off, and the folded sheets are sewed one by one to the twines in the following way: Take the first sheet, pass the needle and thread from the outside through the first hole in between pages 8 and 9, then out through the second hole, then round the first twine, then in again through the second hole, drawing the twine snugly into the cut. Then pass on inside to the second hole and twine, treating them and the third ones the same as the first. The needle and thread come out at last through the fifth hole. The second sheet is now laid on and sewed like the first, in reversed order, and so on. When the thread has left the last hole of the second sheet it should be run round the thread at the first hole of the first sheet, and similarly throughout, so as to connect the sheets at the holes where there are no twines.

When the sheets have all been sewed, the twines are cut off so as to leave about an inch of twine hanging out above and below. The edges must now be cut smoothly. Do this with a ruler and a sharp knife. After this cover the back or folded part of the sheets with a coating of glue. When nearly dry the folded edges can be hammered over with gentle taps of the hammer, producing the convex back and the concave front.

A strip of muslin is next glued fast to the back of the book, having been cut so wide as to overlap one inch both ways. The overlapping parts of the muslin and the ends of the twines are laid upon the outer leaves of the book and pasted fast to them. These outer leaves are usually made of strong dark-colored paper. The ends of the twines are also untwisted and spread out so as to lie smooth. Two pieces of pasteboard are now cut of the proper size for the cover; and a piece of cloth or leather is cut of the needed size and shape to extend over the entire back and sides of the book, and to lap a little under the edges of the pieces of pasteboard. Then the outer leaves and the muslin are pasted to the cover. The book is then placed in the press and kept there until dry, in order that

it may come out in a smooth and regular shape. Instead of extending the leather over the entire cover, it may be allowed to lie only over the back of the book and about an inch of the two sides along next to the back. The book is then said to be half bound; and the remaining part of the pasteboard sides is finished by having cloth or colored paper pasted on. Ornamental corners of leather may be added. A small square piece of leather cut in two diagonally will be of the needed shape.

To put on the title in gilt letters the binder applies a little of the white of an egg over the space where the letters are to be. When this is dry rub the leather with a rag slightly greased, and then lay on the gold-leaf. Next take common type used by printers, heat them a little, and stamp on the letters. The heat makes the gold-leaf stick where it is wanted, and the rest is rubbed off with a rag. All the gilt ornamentation on book covers may be put on in a similar manner.

To get a clear understanding of these directions the learner should examine different kinds of books very closely; and if he has an old and valueless one he can take it to pieces and put it together again. Perhaps he can improve its condition. At least he will learn some of the minor details which our limits forbid us to explain at length. He must remember that in book-binding, as in all other arts, patience and repeated trials are requisite for acquiring the skill that produces neat and handsome work.

ART AMONG THE ROSEWOODS.

BY WADE WHIPPLE.

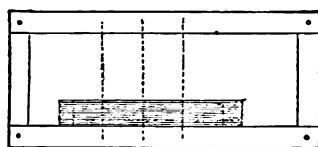
ONE morning, on his way from the village, Jube Rosewood met a photographer taking a group in a little cottage doorway, and there was something so interesting to him about the performance that he spent an hour or more studying particulars and finding out all there was to be learned about the travelling wonder. When he returned home he took a roundabout way to the wood-shed, and had an interview with himself there for about an hour. There was a deal of business done evidently, for you could hear from without a vigorous chopping and hammering, and noises that suggested his having found more tools than a carpenter usually falls heir to. When he had finished inside, and made several voyages to the house for lime and charcoal and an old bed-quilt or so, he moved around to the green again. Meeting Cuffie and Cato as they were about starting for a mole-hunt, he shouted: "Hey, yo' chillens! run an' fetch Angy heah dis instance! Dar's bus'ness on han' dat 'quires her periklar 'tention."

The two youngsters at once hurried themselves and their rags around the corner to do Jube's bidding, and in a moment returned with a spare-looking mingleton of bare feet, calico gown, and frowzy top-knot, that rejoiced in being the pride of the Rosewood household.

"Angy," said Jube, addressing her as she approached, "dar's gwine ter be a pictur'-gal'ry started ober in de wood-shed, whar fokes dat's han'some kin fin' it out, and git du-plicums ter gib deir nabobs. Yo'm de pusson dat's sorter spected ter drum up trade an' fetch in de victims, an' ef yo'll kin'er frizzle up, an' 'low as how Cuffie an' Cato is yo' chillens, an' yo'm got ter hab deir pictur's tuk ter sorter a'vertize der kin' ob angels dey is, de bus'ness 'll open shop tereckly. Is yo' 'greeable?"

"Jube, I's workin' a nel'fant on dat yer woosted tab fo' mammy's rockin'-cheer, an' ef yo'll gimme time ter git 'nough stiches in de tail ter hol' it on, I'll jine yer," was Angy's reply.

Jube readily agreed. The elephant's tail was attended to. Angy and her party made their toilet, and appeared at the door of the wood-shed. Here everything was in readiness for a brisk business. At the end farthest from the



house, and within a few feet of a door which was but rarely used, the amateur photographer had placed his camera. Upon a pile of wood he had placed an old double-X buck, and within its upper V, aiming directly toward the usual entrance to the shed, rested a large-sized nail keg. This was open at one end, and closed for the time being at the other by an overhanging piece of bed-quilt. To the left of the apparatus was a rude shelf, upon which were some bandbox covers that seemed to be traced with charcoal designs of live subjects. A good-sized window on one side supplied a fair light, while near the entrance a churn, a wash-tub, and a coal scuttle were arranged bottom upward for the accommodation of guests.

Jube advanced to meet his visitors with a bow that certainly endangered his spine, and politely seating the party—Cato upon the churn, Cuffie upon the coal scuttle, and Angy upon the broader basis of the wash-tub—opened the conversation with, "Does yo' puppus habin' yo' kromoze tuk dis mornin', missus?"

"Mos' possible I does," replied Angy; "leastways I's come ter 'quire der costness ob der spekelation, an' ef I

a tin blacking-box from his pocket, and with the air of one holding a two-hundred-dollar stem-winder, remarked:

"Now ef yo'll fix yo' eyes on dis kinary-bud"—pointing to a stuffed crow in the corner—"an' hol's yo' breff till I gibs yo' de signum, yo'll 'blige de artis'."

Notwithstanding the tickling match that was going on between Cuffie and Cato, and Angy's efforts to keep them from getting hopelessly tangled in the skeleton skirt, Jube held up the curtain of the camera until his blacking-box watch indicated the regulation time; and then, with a snap of the tin cover he dropped the drapery, shouted "Dat 'll do," and drawing out the bandbox cover from beneath the instrument, retired for a moment behind a hogshead in a dark corner of the "gal'ry." Appearing shortly, he walked proudly toward the group with his "negative," saying: "Dar's a crane dat does jestice to de 'casione. Mebbe dar's some p'ints dar dat yo'll fin' missin' when yo' come ter look fo' 'em, but de linerments is nat-chal, an' de zemblance dat's dar am mo' sim'lar to de subjec' dan ef dey wuz twins."

Angy took the picture, and while Cuffie and Cato indulged in all sorts of antics over it, gave it a careful examination, and said:

"Dat's tol'able. Nobody kin say dar's flatumry in dem feechers, but de out-lines is all dar. Sho' 'nough de chillens looks like dey wuz gehawkin' 'roun' on a paddle-wheel, but dat's owin' to de tan-trums ob de subjec's, I 'spec'."

"Jesso," returned Jube. "Dar's no spy-glass, no matter how intel'gen' dey is, dat 'll pac'fy all de kicks outen chillen's legs ter dat condition dat dey'll be ca'm in de pictur'. P'aps, dough, ef yo'll be kin' 'nough ter look in de chube 'nudder time dar'll be some 'provement."

"I's 'gree'ble," replied Angy, "ef yo'll jis grope de fam'ly nosegay, moreover, we'll sot fo' one ob dem *nejus fulcrums*, per-vided yo'll promis' dar won' be no squinch-eyes in dar."



"SCAMPER OUT O' HERE, YO' CHILLENS."

don' hab ter gib a mo'gage on my chillens ter pay fo' de 'wes'ment, we'll properly be tuk."

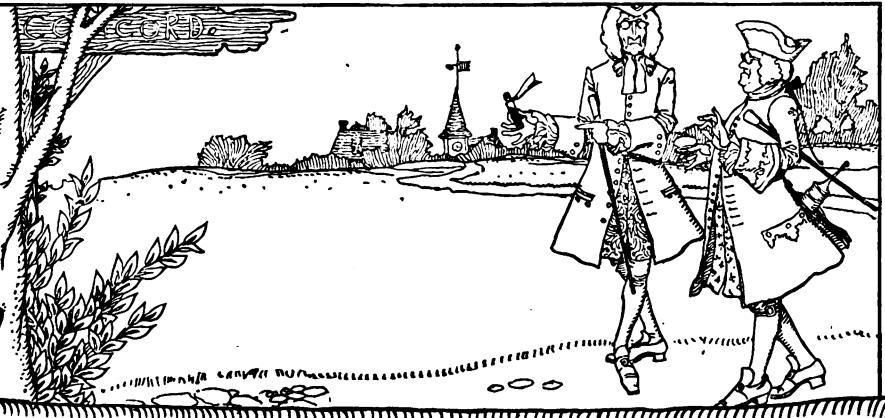
"Thar'll be no trubbel 'bout de tums, missus," said Jube, as he walked toward the shelf and returned with a few specimens. "We don' quar'l wid nobody 'bout pennies, an' wha' we skimps up on one cus'mer we lumps it on de nex' one 'cordin'ly."

Jube set to work to group his subjects, putting Cato on Angy's lap in such a way as to throw the skeleton hoop, which she regarded as the most attractive article of her toilet, forward with an open chicken-coop effect. Cuffie was given a kneeling posture, his boots slipping down to the knees in the operation, and jutting out far enough to one side to give the idea that the understanding of the youngster was manly in the extreme. Jube finally walked to his nail keg, covered it with the bed-quilt, and went through all the movements necessary to get a proper focus. Then putting a previously prepared blue bandbox cover in a crack in the mouth end of the keg, he drew

Jube promised, and the family were grouped for another trial. What the artistic result might have been can not be recorded, for just as Jube had put his head in the nail keg to arrange the focus, the door immediately behind him was opened with a bang, and Mammy Rosewood entered like a whirlwind, shouting:

"Scamper out o' here, yo' chillens. De ole man's been screechin' fo' yer dese fo'teen hours, an' he's down dar in de fish-pon' polin' 'roun' huntin' fo' yo' fragmen's. Skip down dar, an' tole 'im wha' come o' yer."

The group retreated through the other door with "neatness and dispatch," but poor Jube, going over with the toppled nail keg, was obliged to remain with his head exploring its interior, and his heels kicking vigorously in the direction of the roof, until his mammy pulled him out, and sent him flying out of the wood-shed pursued by an animated barrel stave. And so the "gal'ry" was closed, and the taste for art in the Rosewood family discouraged for a time.



VICTIM TO SCIENCE.

There were two wise physicians once, of glory and renown,
Who went to take a little walk nigh famous Concord town.
Oh! very, very great and wise and learned men were they,
And wise and learned was th' talk, as they walked on th' way.
And as they walked, and talked and talked, they came to whre they
A Crow as black as any hat, a-sitting on y^e ground. found
Y^e Crow was very, very sick, as you may quickly see
By just looking at y^e picture th' is drawn h^{re} by me.
Now whn y^e doctors came to him they mended of th' pace,
And said one unto y^e other, "H^{re}'s an interesting case;
A case th' sh^{ld} be treated, and be treated speedily.
I have - yes, here it is - a pill th' has been made by me.
Now, I have had occasion —" Said y^e other, "In most cases
Your pills are excellently good, but h^{re}, my friend, are traces
Of a lassitude, a languor, th' your pills cld hardly aid;
In short, they're rather violent for th', I am afraid.
I have a tincture —" Said y^e first, "Your tincture cannot touch
A case as difficult as th'; my pills are better, much."
"Your pills, sir, are too violent." "Your tonic is too weak."
"As I have said, sir, in th' case —" "Permit me, sir, to speak."
And so they argued long and high, and on, and on, and on,
Until they lost their tempers, and an hour or more had gone.
But long before their arguments y^e question did decide,
Y^e Crow, not waiting for y^e end, incontinently died.

Y^E MORAL

(is apparent.)

H. Pyle.

OUR POST-OFFICE BOX.



THE GOOD-NIGHT PRAYER.

I OFTEN sit by my bright open fire in the twilight and think of the hosts of little children who are at this pleasant hour just getting ready to go to bed. How many pretty bed-time stories the mothers are telling, and how many sweet good-night kisses are given, and happy little songs are sung! I am sure that no child who reads the Post-office Box ever goes to sleep at night, or rises in the morning, without saying a prayer to the Father in heaven who takes care of this great busy world, and of the people in it. I would be very sorry if I thought the older boys, even when away at school or beginning active life, gave up this regular habit of childhood.

I have been writing two little prayers—one for morning and one for evening—which I think some of the children may like to learn and repeat in addition to those they already know.

Morning Prayer.

May I this day my Lord obey,
Be true, obedient, kind, and sweet,
Attend to what my parents say,
On errands run with willing feet.
I thank the Lord for happy rest;
I know He sends me what is best;
And if I sleep or if I wake,
I all things ask for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

Evening Prayer.

Dear Lord, I pray Thee round my home
To bid the watching angels come;
Take care of all I love to-night;
And guard us till the morning light;
Forgive Thy little child for sin,
And make me clean and pure within.
And when I rest, and when I rise,
To Jesus let me lift my eyes.
This prayer I very humbly make,
And offer it for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

The next little prayer, which is beautiful and reverent, has been kindly sent to the Post-office Box by a friend, Mr. John M. R., Leesburg, Texas:

I thank Thee, Lord, for last night's sleep.
My soul and body this day keep.
Guide me all sinfulness to shun,
My feet in wisdom's ways to run.
In usefulness help me to grow;
What should be done teach me to know;
And promptly may I ere the night,
It truly do with all my might.
Thy Spirit reign within my heart.
That I from Thee may not depart;
And if I die ere day be done,
Give me a home with Thy dear Son.
All this I ask for Jesus' sake,
Who on Himself my sins did take.

Amen.

The little poem which follows may not please the children quite so much as it surely will their fathers and mothers, and very likely their dear grandparents. A home always seems to me complete when it has a grandmother or grandfather in it, and sometimes these old people, who have young hearts still, write lovely things for the Post-office Box. So it is only fair to slip in this bit of verse for them. It was composed by Mrs. Barbauld, one of the earliest writers for children, when she was over seventy years old. All the great poets since then have delighted in it, and in a charming sketch which forms part of *A Book of Sibyls*, recently published by Messrs. Harper &

Brothers, Miss Thackeray says it is almost sacred to her because it was dear to her gifted father, and also to one who had tended his childhood as well as that of his children:

Life, we've been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear;
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh or tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not good-night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me good-morning.

SHIMLAN, MOUNT LEBANON.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—Would you like to hear about a journey which I took last spring? Our party consisted of papa, grandma, my brother Theodore, and myself, with our cool Butroos (a man), and a donkey boy. We set out about 10 A.M. on the 22d of the beautiful month of May. After riding a few hours we quite lost sight of the sea, and seemed to be blocked in on all sides by mountains. Some were rocky and barren, while others were covered with waving wheat and olive or mulberry trees, and just in front of us rose the beautiful white caps of the other part of the Lebanon range.

All this time we had been descending into the beautiful valley of the Damour. In this valley was a "khan," or inn, only a few feet above the Damour River, where we stopped for lunch, while the cool breeze came up from the water and greatly refreshed us. After we had finished, papa took us to see a mill where flour was ground. When we came back, grandma and I pressed some ferns we had gathered. At 2½ o'clock we started on toward the Deir. We were cordially received by the teacher, Maalin Na'om, and his wife, Maalmy Loulou, at whose house we were to sleep that night. They brought us in some lemonade, and when we were quite rested the teacher took us out for a walk around the town.

The streets were not broad, but nicely paved; those between the "dickakeen," or shops, were broader than usual, and remarkably clean for this country. Presently we came to an open square, where was a beautiful fountain made of dark red and white marble. We went also to the old palace where the massacre was begun between the Druses and Christians in 1860, and to several other places which are not important enough to mention here.

The next day, which was Wednesday, we started, after an early breakfast, for B'teddeen to see the Pasha's palace. It is of ancient work, mostly of carved stone, that must have taken a great deal of time and skill. Theodore and I had never seen anything of the kind before, and enjoyed it very much. After going all through the palace, we went up to the prison, which has been lately built, and near that we saw men at work on the new prison hospital.

Then we went on to a place half-way between B'teddeen and Mukhtara, where was a spring, and above it a walnut-tree. There we ate our lunch, and rested awhile, and then went on our journey to Jisre el Barook, just before ascending the hill, on the top of which Mukhtara was situated. I never saw such a pretty place. I climbed into a tree that leaned away over the water, as if trying to get more of the cool fresh spray of the river, and I could not help thinking as I sat there of the beautiful crystal river in heaven.

Toward evening we went up to Mukhtara, where we were to stay at Maalim Dawood's house. A good many men came in to see papa, and when the news spread that we were with him, crowds of women and children came and stood around the door and windows and stared at us. The teacher brought us in a small low table, upon which we ate our supper. After that papa went out to attend a prayer-meeting, and we, being very tired and sleepy, asked the women to retire and leave us to go to bed.

The next day grandma said she hardly felt able to go any farther over those rocky steep roads, so she returned to Deir el Kumer to await us there. After seeing her off we went up to the palace of the Jumblat family, and were shown all through it, and we saw the "Beg," and the old "Sitt," or lady, the mother of the Beg, and then we took a long walk, and came back about noon.

That afternoon we started off for Jezzeen. It was a hot day, and the ride a long one. On arriving at the pretty town we found our way to the teacher's house, where we had been invited to spend the night. We were quite pleased to see such a neat, pretty home. The teacher Tony had married, about eight months before, a teacher from the Sidon Seminary, Maaleeny Houla. After we had rested, Teacher Tony took us out to see the water-falls, for which that place is noted. He told us that some gentlemen had lately measured the falls, and found they fell 224 feet down a perpendicular precipice of rocks. We stood on an opposite precipice and looked across at them; they did not look like water, but like fine white dust, showing all the colors of the rainbow in the setting sun.

The next morning we went out to visit the boys' school; it was in a room about thirty feet square. At one end was a table with a large Bible, a few books, and pen and ink, with a chair beside it for the teacher. The pupils sat on a mat upon the floor; their books and slates were

kept in a closet in the wall. After leaving the school we took a walk about the town, and then went home. While we were putting up our lunch, and preparing for the return journey, papa went to call on a "Sheik," and we joined him there.

Soon after leaving Jezzeen we began to ascend a steep mountain path, which was so narrow that in one place Butroos, our cook, who rode a very small donkey, placing a foot on a rock on one side of the road and a foot on the other, let the donkey pass from under him. We were fully half an hour, or perhaps more, going up, up, and around and around the mountain, then along a path that made me dizzy to look down, it was so steep and high. After a while we had to dismount, the road was so rocky. Our destination was a famous castle cut out of the rocks, but which has mostly fallen away, where, two hundred years ago, a rebel called Fekhrie Beg took refuge with his men. In some places we had to pass between ledges of rocks not more than two or two and a half feet apart.

After we had gone all through the castle, and had seen the secret chamber, we mounted, and went on to the little village of Neeha, where we visited the school. We did not stop long, but went on to our next resting-place, which was Ommatour, quite a distance from Neeha. On arriving there we went to the house of one of papa's pupils; there we were invited to take dinner with them. And such a dinner! I don't think the boys and girls in America have ever tasted one like it. A low round table was put before us; on it were placed alternately dishes of rice and milk, rice rolled up in grape leaves, and plates of honey and home-made cheese; in the centre a platter with a chicken stuffed with rice, pine-seed, and spices, and around it dishes of "lebin," or sour milk, dates, and dried figs, besides Arab bread and hard-boiled eggs. It was really discouraging to sit down to such a meal. However, we managed to dispose of about one-fifth of what was on the table. When we could eat no more they tried to make us eat.

On the morning of the next day we went on to Mukhtara, where we had left some of our things. On arriving there we collected our property, and bade good-bye to the teacher and his wife, who had been so kind in entertaining us, and rode on to Deir el Kumer. We made pretty good time, and reached there about 1 o'clock. We were very glad to see grandma again. We spent the afternoon calling on some natives.

The next day, which was Sunday, we went to church, and read Sunday books in the morning, and did the same in the afternoon. In the evening there was a prayer-meeting held in the teacher's house, which we attended.

Next day, after an early dinner at half past eleven, we started on the homeward journey. It was with half-glad, half-sorrowful feelings that we took our departure. We were happy to see the dear ones at home, but we were sorry we could not keep on travelling, for we had enjoyed our seven days' journey so much. Papa promises to take Theodore and me to Baalbec before long. If you have been interested in this journey, I shall be glad to tell you about that when we go. I hope this letter is not too long to put in the Post-office Box.

JENNIE C. P. (11 years old).

A little correspondent who has taken so interesting a journey as this, and who has learned to describe it so well, is very welcome in the Post-office Box. Should you go to Baalbec, Jennie, we will all be glad to hear about the trip. Edith and Theodore will see their letters in the next number.

MORGAN PARK, ILLINOIS.

I am a little boy seven years old. I want to tell you how I made a puppet-show. I took the frame of an old box, nailed a piece of sheet on it, and there was my puppet frame. Then I made some paper puppets, and had a real nice puppet-show. I piled some books under it, and set it up in front of the lamp. I had Cinderella and Blue-beard. Perhaps some of the boys would like to do this.

HARRY J. S.

I fear my little boy's explanation is not very clear, but his puppets were a great success. He drew the figures on paper, and cut them out, folding up the bottom so that they would stand between the lamp and frame, and the shadows were fine, especially Cinderella's coach.

HARRY'S MAMMA.

This little letter has been waiting a long time. The other day, on opening a drawer, I heard a mournful rustling, and there it was, looking up reproachfully in my face. I hope some of the little fellows will make a puppet-show like Harry's.

The three following are Indian-summer letters, and all come from Batavia, Illinois:

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—This is the first time I ever wrote a letter to a lady with whom I am not acquainted. I am a boy eleven years old, and have a very cheerful time gathering apples. Nearly all of the leaves have fallen from the trees. Chestnuts do not grow here. The sun's leaves are very nearly gone. My mother is very glad when there is sunshine so late in the au-

tum, because she washes for two families and many gentlemen. Ivy does not grow in our yard. I am not willing to be reckless. I have no pets to tell you about, but I had an old cat, and I had to shoot him, because he took some little chickens. I have a very cunning little brother; his name is Simon. I go to school, and have very much fun. My teacher is very kind to me. My father is dead, and I have to help my mother all I can.

THEODORE F.

If you help your mother, and do everything she asks you to do, you prove yourself a manly boy.

I am a little girl ten years old. I live in the country, three-quarters of a mile from school, and walk there every morning. The teacher is very cheerful when the scholars behave themselves. There is a great deal of sumac in the woods by our house, and the leaves are all dropping off. Sometimes I am very reckless in my spelling lessons. Chestnuts do not grow here, but if they did I would be willing to go and get some, for I love them very much. Apples, walnuts, hickory-nuts, hazel-nuts, and butternuts grow here instead. The ivy is very pretty now, but the leaves are falling off.

NINA M. C.

The leaves are falling fast, and the apples are all gathered. When in New York, a few years ago, I gathered some chestnuts; they do not grow here, but we have hickory-nuts, hazel-nuts, walnuts, and butternuts. While gathering nuts in the woods one day I found some sumac and poison-ivy. Mother don't like me to touch strange vines, but I am sometimes reckless, and do not cheerfully obey her. I like to play in the sunshine when mother is willing. I am getting sleepy, so must be dropping my pen. Good-by.

CLIFFORD G.

Three others, from John C., Katie W., and Amy W., are equally as successful as these in combining the assigned words, and I am very sorry I can not also make room for them.

HOOMA.

I am a boy twelve years old. I think Mrs. Lucy C. Lillie's stories are very nice. We have a large bayou here, and have steamboats running in it. We have fine times fishing here in summer. The plantations are busy making sugar. My father keeps a large dry-goods store. I go to school, and in the evening when I come home I help my father sell in the store. I have one sister and two brothers. I like to read the letters in the Post-office Box. I have no pets to tell you about, like many of the boys and girls.

JOSEPH C.

I have been in the country this summer, because I was very sick, but now I am round and rosy. I enjoyed myself very much, climbing trees and fences, and looking for eggs in the hay. I am very sorry to tell you that my mamma died five months ago, and I have no sister or brother, and live with my papa in the city, and we keep a servant. I have six little friends, who go to school with me, but I think I like one the best—that is Gussie W. We have made a plan for every little girl to give twenty-five cents for a present for our teacher, which will make \$1.50. Do you think that will be enough? I am twelve years old; my name is

ANNA S.

I am always very sorry for little girls whose mothers God has taken, for I know they are often lonely. I think \$1.50 will be enough to buy a very pretty present for your teacher. For that sum you may purchase a beautiful book, a useful little shopping bag, a dainty fan, a handsome inkstand, or a really lovely cup and saucer. Whatever you give her she will be sure to prize for the sake of the little givers.

TROY, NEW YORK.

I am seven years old, and am dictating this for mamma, who writes for me. I used to live in Auburn, and have been in the prison, and heard all the convicts sing. It made a noise like a steam-engine when they marched out of the chapel. They put their hands on each other's shoulders and swing from side to side as they walk.

Mamma and I often went to the Insane Asylum. There was a bad old man in one of the worst wards there, and as I was hopping along, holding Dr. Macdonald's hand, he asked the doctor if he might lay his hand on my head. My hair is yellow, and curly, and mamma thought, maybe, as the sun struck it, it made the old man think of something long ago when he wasn't crazy and bad. All the patients were very neat, and their rooms were almost pretty.

We go to the Holy Cross to church. The girls of the parish school sing very sweetly. They march in and take their places with the choir. They wear red capes, and hats trimmed with red.

Almost all the collars and cuffs that are worn are made in big buildings here in Troy. In Cohoes, a little distance from here, is the largest cotton-mill in the world. At noon, when the girls go home from the mill, the street is so crowded that one can hardly get through. They go on one side, and come on the other.

My papa has iron-works in Canada. We are

going there pretty soon, and if this letter is good enough to print, I will write about what I see in my new home. I have a sweet little sister three years old; her name is Marian. I forgot to say that the stories in HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE are ever so nice. Mrs. Lillie's are lovely.

CARO S. B.

Thank you, dear, for this pleasant letter. Now that we have enjoyed it we will listen to Robbie, who has a queer little pet to tell us about.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

I am a little boy five years old, and I have taken HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE almost one year. I want to write a letter about my pets. I have two canaries, a dear little kitty named Topsy, and, best of all, a baby flying squirrel. And he came to me in such a queer way! One night my mamma heard a great scratching in the long water-pipe that carries the rain-water down into the cistern, but nobody thought to look and see what made the noise. One day, when I went to scrape out the dry leaves from the strainer in the pipe, I found two dear little flying-squirrels, both dead. After that, early one morning, when my mamma heard a noise in the water-pipes, she called my papa to go and see what was in there, and, sure enough, another poor little fellow, in jumping from limb to limb on the great trees that bend over the roof of my house, had fallen down into the pipe, and would have gone quite into the cistern but for the strainer. He had beaten himself almost to death trying to climb up the long spout, and he was wet and shivering with cold. We put him in warm flannel before the grate fire, and for a long time we thought he would die; but when his fur was dry my mamma gave him some warm milk, and pretty soon he opened his great dark eyes and began to run about.

In a little while he could take a hickory-nut, and holding it in his little wee paws, just as though they were tiny hands, and curling his fluffy tail over his back, sitting up on the carpet in such a cunning little bunch, nibbled away at the nut until it was all gone. Now he sleeps all day in a little box filled with cotton, and when night comes, and boys and girls go to bed, he wakes up and frisks about his large cage quite happily, or carries acorns from one corner to another, or into his box, where he can nibble in secret and at his leisure. His wings are not like bird wings, and do not carry him on the air, only help him to take long leaps from branch to branch.

My mamma says my letter is too long. She writes for me.

ROBBIE H. B.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

We are two little brothers of five and seven years. We can not write, so our sister Maudie is writing this letter for us. Our papa has bought YOUNG PEOPLE for us for two years, and we have learned to love it dearly. We have a kind Aunt Lizzie, who reads the stories to us, and sometimes we shout with glee. When dear papa brings our paper we are always standing in the door waiting eagerly for him. The one who has been the best little boy all day has it to look at first; but we have been taught by such a kind, good mamma that we know the meaning of the word "generosity," and always share our precious paper. We wonder how many other little boys and girls have learned this pretty word. We have a little dog for a pet, and we call him the Groom, because he will sit up on his hind-legs in such a cunning fashion. We had a sweet canary named Jack; but the maid forgot to feed him while we were at Scarborough last summer, so he died. We did not scold Ann, for she means well, and accidents will happen.

We wish you would tell us how to amuse ourselves on rainy days when poor mamma has a headache, and Maudie is with her governess. We wish to be quiet, for fear of disturbing mamma, and are often at a loss for occupation.

And now good-by, dear Postmistress. With a double handful of love, we remain,

PARKIE P. and JOEY J. R.

Why do you not color pictures with your pretty paints on rainy days? Of course you have a box of paints. Or you might paste pictures in a scrap-book.

WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA.

We are little girls, but we have been taking YOUNG PEOPLE nearly a year. Our mamma reads it to us every week. I think "Raising the 'Pearl'" was a pretty story, and Carrie says she thinks so too. We live in a pretty little place with a large grassy yard. Duke—that's our setter dog—plays with us nearly all the time. Jeannie is the oldest, and has just begun to go to school. We have a darling little sister Kate; she is so mischievous! She tries to hide our YOUNG PEOPLE from us. We spent part of the summer on the sea-coast at Cedarwood, grandpa's summer residence. We were there during the August storm. A great many boats were broken to pieces by the waves. Uncle's yacht, the *Taffy*, was broken into small pieces, and his hunting and fishing boats were washed up in the yard by the angry waves. The gangway and bath-house were washed away, and the fences were carried off. Mamma says the storm was grand and magnificent, but we didn't think so, because we were frightened.

Our papa used to edit a daily paper, and we often went to his office and saw the printers setting type, and the big presses printing the paper. He travels now for a tobacco house, and we want him to see our letter the next time he comes home. Your little friends,

JEANNIE and CARRIE.

W. C. C.: Jumbo is a good name for a big dog.

I can not give you the address you ask for.—Albie D.: I hope when you get your bicycle you will enjoy it as much as you did your friend's gentle gray pony.—Edith G.: I was glad to hear from you, but there are so many letters that yours could not crowd in this time.—Katie W.: I hope you are not really reckless in caring for the baby.

—Giles Y.: Bantams are very cunning pets.—Big Sister: A very good plan that of having a family bank in the dining-room, into which everybody may drop pennies for the Fresh-air Fund, or some other good purpose.—Mabel B.: What is your pretty canary's name, and is he a sweet singer?

I like to receive your letters, dear, even though I can not find a niche for them.—E. M. L.: I am pleased that you like the stories.—Herbert W. B.: So you have a tortoise.—Kelen M.: That was a silly child of whom you wrote. When people are sent on errands they should think of what they are doing.—Ada B. R.: Roller skates are a wee bit dangerous, I think.—Nellie and Charlie R.: A thousand thanks for your lovely gift of chrysanthemums.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

THREE ENIGMAS.

1. My first is in wet, but not in dry.
My second is in run, but not in fly.
My third is in eat, but not in drink.
My fourth is in green, and also in pink.
My whole is the name of a little bird
That often in spring you've seen and heard.

J. R. H.

2. My first in hail, but not in snow.
My second in hop, but not in dance.
My third is in climb, but not in go.
My fourth is in gallop, but not in prance.
My fifth is in young, but not in old.
My whole is a plant that fears not cold.

LITTLE FIDGET.

3. My first is in Prudence, but not in Sue.
My second in Lulu, but not in Rue.
My third in Ursula, but not in Kate.
My fourth is in Molly, but not in Sate.
My fifth is in Carrie, but not in Ray.
My sixth is in Ada, but not in Nell.
My seventh is in Kathie, but not in May.
My eighth is in Ethel, as all may tell.
My whole is something good and sweet,
Which children always think a treat.

MINNIE B.

No. 2.

SIX EASY DIAMONDS.

- 1.—A letter. 2. A couch. 3. A fruit. 4. An animal. 5. A letter.
- 2.—1. A letter. 2. Part of the head. 3. Defied.
4. A kind of goods. 5. A letter.
- 3.—1. A letter. 2. An animal. 3. What all want.
4. A precious stone. 5. A letter.
- 4.—1. A letter. 2. A boy's nickname. 3. Is found in books. 4. Human beings. 5. A letter.
- 5.—1. A letter. 2. Is worn on the head. 3. Are sometimes useful. 4. Is a prize. 5. Is a letter.
- 6.—1. A letter. 2. Part of a plant. 3. A bird.
4. To turn over. 5. A letter.

GEORGIE WARDELL and

WILLIAM NEDDERMANN.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 200.

No. 1. U R
I N N D O N
U N C A S R O V E R
N A N N B T
S R

No. 2. Swamp-fox.

No. 3. A aro N
S ag E
A rro W
G ayl Y
R ati O
A ste R
Y ol K

No. 4. Louisa M. Alcott.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from Georgie Wardell, William Neddermann, Edwin T. Pollock, Eddie R. Couch, Frankie Couch, Robin Dyke, Raldie, Gazette, Bessie F. Maynard, Page Colby, Katie K., Arnold D., F. C. B., Anna Granger, Little Fidget, Emily John, and Francis Johnson.



BO-PEEP AND LITTLE BOY BLUE.

LITTLE Bo-peep a watch did keep
O'er her sheep while the reapers were reaping;
When she heard a horn sounding over the corn,
Boy Blue round the beech-tree was peeping.

A CURIOUS TRICK.

GET a piece of string about six or seven feet long. Tie the ends together. Take off your coat and place the string over your arm, and your hand in the pocket of your waistcoat. Then propose to remove the string without taking your hand from your pocket, and without passing the string over your hand.

To remove the string: pass a loop under the part of the waistcoat which is over your right shoulder. Then pull up the slack, open out the loop, and put your head through it, being careful not to twist the string. Next pass the loop under the waistcoat above the left shoulder, and put your left arm up through the loop.

The string is now released, and can be drawn down the body, when it will fall off at your feet.

An assistant may be employed to pass the string as directed, but the trick is more effective if done single-handed. In this case, put your left hand through the right armhole of the waistcoat, take hold of the string, pull up the slack, and pass the loop over your head. When doing this be careful to put the string which was at first in front of your fore-arm behind your head. Then let go of the string, and put your left hand, from left to right, through the left armhole of the waistcoat. Catch hold of the string again, pull it through the armhole, and pass your left hand upward through the loop.

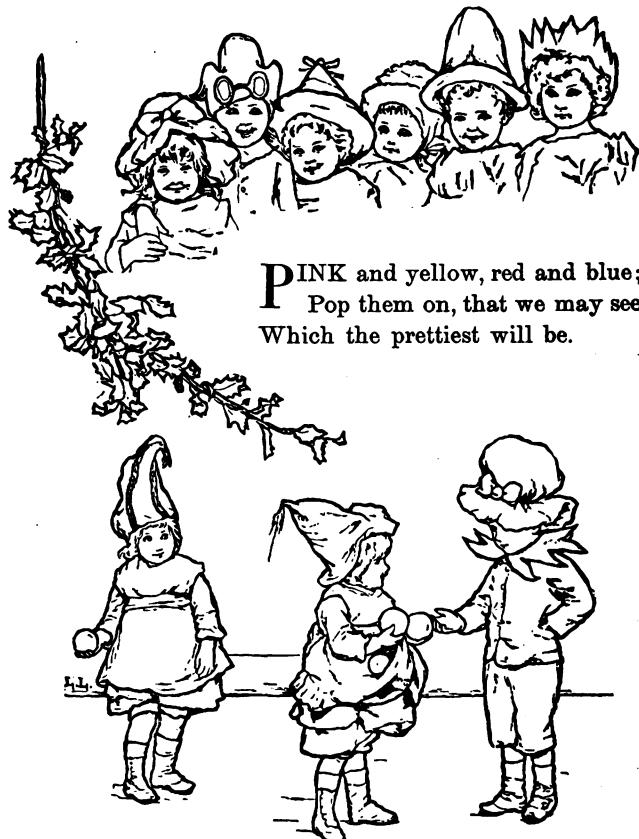


FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

FRENCH and English, three and three;
Merrily we'll strive to see
Which side will the stronger be.

Johnny, Susan, little Bell,
Pull against Tom, Bob, and Nell;
Merrily they pull, and well.

Now the English are over the bound;
Now the French are down on the ground:
Which are the stronger they have not found.



"SEE WHAT WE FOUND IN OUR MOTTO PAPERS!"



"MAMMA, I CAN'T FIND MY OTHER STOCKING."

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HARPER'S

YOUNG PEOPLE

AN ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY.

VOL. V.—NO. 213.

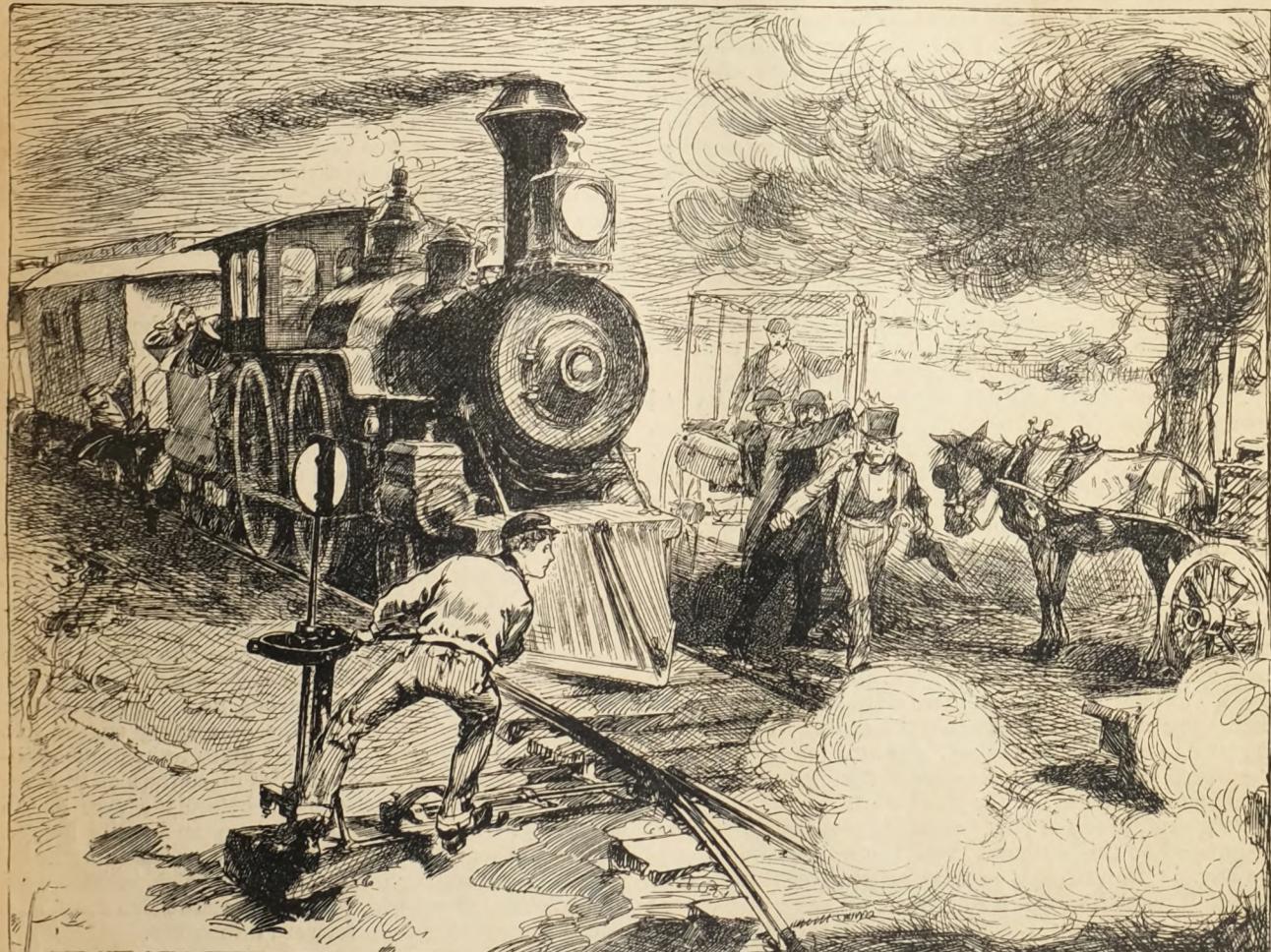
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A COOL-HEADED BOY.

The Story of a Thanksgiving-Day.

BY MRS. KATE UPSON CLARK.

"YOU can't go to school to-day, Edward," said old Mrs. St. John to her grandson. She was placing the scanty breakfast on the table as she spoke, and her face was very sad. "Grandpa's feeling worse than ever this morning, and you'll have to tend switch for him again to-day. It won't make quite so much difference as it would if 'twasn't the day before Thanksgiving. There's



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going to be a little vacation anyway, and a day more or less doesn't make much difference."

"No," replied the boy—a large, strong-limbed fellow of fourteen—"twon't make much difference. I've been thinking, anyway, that I wouldn't go to school much longer. I oughtn't to. Grandpa's getting feeble all the while. Let me see—how many days have I been out of school tending switch for him this fall?"

"Well, there was one—or was it two?—that Sam Pentecost did it. That was before they thought you was big enough. It didn't take long, after the manager saw you, to decide that you could tend switch just as well as your grandpa, did it?" The old lady looked at her grandson with fond pride.

"No," he rejoined, modestly. "'I'll keep an eye on you,' said the manager, 'but I reckon you'll do. Every day your grandfather isn't able to work you may take his place till you hear from me to the contrary.' That was pretty good, wasn't it, grandma?"

It had, indeed, been a very great joy to the St. Johns that the boy had been deemed capable of filling his grandfather's place sometimes. It was one of the rules of the railroad that when any switchman was ill he should provide and pay for a substitute to do his work. This had borne very hard upon the St. Johns, who had nothing to live upon excepting the old man's wages. Edward was a very bright and ambitious lad, and his dead father and mother had begged, almost with their last breaths, that as good an education should be given him as possible; but they had left no property behind them, and misfortunes had fallen thickly upon old Mr. St. John and his little family. Edward had been impatient for a long time to go to work, but the old man had answered: "I know Mr. Belding would give you a good place in his store, Teddy; but I guess I can 'stick it out' a year longer. I want to give you just as much schooling as I can for your father's sake. We can get enough to eat and wear for another year, I'm sure, and send you to school too."

But the old man had not counted on the "chills and fever," which had been troubling him for several months, and, as his wife said, he was now feeling worse than ever. She and Edward, upon making the calculation which the boy had proposed, found that he had lost ten whole days from school during the short fall term just ending, and had spent every holiday in helping his grandfather.

"You see, grandma," Edward went on, between rapid mouthfuls, for it was nearly time for him to be at his post, and he couldn't waste the minutes over his breakfast—"you see, if I went into Mr. Belding's store there would be something coming in every week, and pretty soon more pay if I did well. If I'd been there all the fall, we shouldn't be having such a dreary Thanksgiving-day as to-morrow is going to be. Thanksgiving!" groaned the boy, bitterly: "grandpa sick, and no turkey nor anything, but bread and ham and mush: I'm not thankful a bit."

"Edward, how can you!" cried his pious grandmother, astonished at this outburst from her usually quiet, gentle boy. "Don't speak so loud, or grandpa'll hear you, and it'll make him feel bad. We're all alive, and we are not nearly so needy as some, and the Lord will provide. 'Tisn't going to be such a Thanksgiving as we used to have, nor such a one as I hope we'll have another year, but we've enough to be thankful for, dear knows. Cheer up, Edward! you're grandma's light and joy, you know; *you mustn't get blue.*" But in spite of her struggle to be brave the old lady had to brush a tear away as she bade the boy good-by, and watched him make his way across the stubble fields, on which as yet no snows had fallen, toward the Linville station, where he was to work, and which lay nearly a mile away.

The switch was set just right for the first train, and he walked past it up to the telegraph operator's room to see if there was any news or if there were any special in-

structions to receive. No; everything was all right, and through the morning the freight trains, express, and "accommodations" dashed by in their usual succession.

About two o'clock, however, things began to get mixed up. An express was late, so that another one had to be telegraphed to wait for it at Sherburne, the next town to Linville on the east; while at Stillwater, the next town to the west, two freight trains were blocked up, waiting for a clear roadway. At last a freight engine ran off the track just beyond Sherburne, and after that everything went helter-skelter. Edward felt excited, and tended his switch with greater care than ever.

At four o'clock the down express from Sherburne was standing in front of the station, several minutes behind time, but with warning signals out, which the engineer thought would be enough to protect his train from an up express which was just then due, and the rumble of which, not so very far away, could be distinctly heard at the station. All would have been well if only the engineer of the Stillwater train had been on the alert; but he, knowing that he had the right of way, had not been paying much attention to the road in front. He was, therefore, so frightened when he saw the Sherburne train blocking the path that he reversed his engine and applied the air-brakes so suddenly that he broke the connections of the latter, and the heavy train went rushing on, in spite of the reversed engine wheels, with tremendous force, to meet, apparently, an awful doom.

Edward St. John was one of perhaps a half-dozen at the station who recognized the condition of things, and he sprang toward his switch, thinking that he might possibly avert the terrible calamity by turning the approaching train on to the siding. But his heart almost stopped beating when he saw that the engine of the standing train was a half-length over the switch.

"Back! back! back!" he cried, grasping the switch with one hand, and waving wildly with the other. "For Heaven's sake, back!"

There was a little puff of steam as the engineer grasped the boy's meaning, and the great engine began to move slowly backward. But the coming train was almost there. A dozen men rushed forward to pull the boy away.

"Get off! get off!" they cried. "You'll be killed!"

But he did not move, and there was no time to speak. One thought, though, flashed through his almost distracted mind, as he felt the hot breath of the engine against his cheek. "It's either I or a hundred others—perhaps both. But it had better be I than a hundred!"

Oh, so slowly the engine moved off the switch! The boy could have touched both engines when at last it was free. Then, like a lightning stroke, he made one mighty effort. The front wheels of the on-coming engine just caught the switch, and the whole great train went crashing safely past the horrible danger, on to the side track.

Then everything turned black before the eyes of the brave boy, who had so nearly given up his life for "a hundred others," and he fell, a little unconscious heap, with his head resting on the iron bar which, in obedience to his frantic grasp, had moved those stubborn rails, and sent the on-coming train forward into safety.

A score of men rushed forward to lift him up and bear him into the station, where all was in a state of the wildest confusion, and into which men came pouring from the newly arrived train, crying, "What was it?—what's the matter?"

"Matter!" sang out a sturdy brakeman, who had seen the whole thing, and whose voice broke a dozen times as he made his brief reply,

"Nothin', only that this yer boy's saved a lot o' you fellows from bein' jammied ter pieces."

"How? What'd he do? What's his name? Tell us about it."

A universal shudder ran through the listening throng

as the tale was told. They surged around the only just reviving boy, every one anxious to get a glimpse of the young hero. Then, as there began to be talk of the train's moving on, and no step had been taken to reward him for his bravery, some one proposed that a subscription paper should be sent around. It was done, and within a few minutes a purse of five hundred dollars had been made up and handed to the bewildered boy.

It was scarcely fifteen minutes after that horrible moment of suspense, when it had seemed as though eternity and time were brought face to face, before the trains had both moved on, and the usual dullness and silence fell over the Linville station.

Then Edward got up, looking very pale and weak.

"Mr. Barton," he said, to the station-agent, "can you get somebody else to tend switch the rest of the day? There didn't anything hit me, but I feel awfully queer. I'll be around or send somebody to-morrow."

"Go home, my boy," said the station-agent. "You've earned a rest if anybody has. Glad they paid you so well. They'd oughter. Lots o' passengers—bein' Thanksgivin'-time, luckily for you—but all the same, it would 'a been bad if you hadn't 'a tended to that switch." And the station-agent shook the boy's hand as he passed slowly through the door and out upon the platform.

There were two burly fellows standing there, apparently waiting for him. He knew them. They were track-men, and rough but kindly fellows.

"We seen ye, b'y—we seen ye," said one of them, "an' we hain't no fault to find with the what you done, an' now—ketch on there, Jake!—we're a-goin' to see ye safe home. You ain't strong enough to git over them stubbly fields to-day." And before the astonished boy could tell what they were doing the men had joined hands, hoisted him in air, and were carrying him bodily through the cheering crowd toward his grandfather's cottage, attended by a large party of small boys. One of these, ambitious to be the first to tell the news, rushed ahead, and delivered the following account of the affair into the astonished ears of the aged couple there.

"You see, it's Ed" (puff, puff). "He seen 'em comin', Ed did" (puff, puff), "'n' he shoved 'er to, 'n' my" (puff, puff), "how they hollered! 'n' they give him lots 'n' lots o' money" (puff, puff), "'n' Ed he just fainted dead away—" Fortunately just here a more competent person took up the tale, or the poor old folks would have gone crazy. Ere long the boys ran home, dispersed by the judicious advice of the men, and the little family was left to itself.

What a proud and happy day it was for them all!

"And now," said Edward, when he had begun to feel more like himself, "I'm going to get up, and go down to the village and buy a turkey and some 'fixings,' and we'll have a dinner to-morrow 'as is a dinner,'" and he smiled a happy smile into the proud old faces looking down into his.

"Well! well!" his grandmother was saying, not stopping to discuss his plan at once, "I guess the manager's glad enough you was in grandpa's place. You wouldn't ever have thought of doing that, would you, grandpa?"

"No, no," said grandpa, modestly. "I'm too old to fly round spry as Ted here."

"And as for your going down to get some Thanksgivin' fixin's," went on his grandmother, "you lie still awhile longer. To-night 'll be soon enough, and you are all used up; I can see that."

So Edward waited, and it was well that he did, for before the sunset light had died out of the chill November sky there was a knock at the humble door of the St. Johns, and in walked the village minister and Mr. Belding, the store-keeper, and the most important man in the town. Between them they carried a large basket, which proved to be filled with almost everything that you can think of which is suitable for a Thanksgiving feast.

"We have heard of your brave act, my boy," said the minister, looking down admiringly into Edward's flushed face. "You must have thought pretty quick, and acted almost before you thought."

"It all happened in a jiffy, sir," returned Edward, smiling. "I must say I hardly knew what I was doing, and I can't hardly remember now just what I did."

"Well, we all know," said Mr. Belding, kindly. "It's all over the village, and some of us made up a little Thanksgiving basket for you, just to show that we know pluck when we see it, and like it too." Then, lowering his voice a little, "I know how anxious you are for an education, Edward, and some of us have decided to send you off to school for the rest of the year to the best place within reach. And then, Edward, I want you to go in with me for good—in the store. You know I haven't any boy to come after me, and I've always liked you. Well, I won't say any more now, for I see you aren't any of you very strong to-night; but we wish you a happy Thanksgiving, and you can think about what I've said."

Before the bewildered family could fairly grasp the meaning of the brilliant offer which Mr. Belding had made he and the minister were off, and they were by themselves once again. A more genuine Thanksgiving was never enjoyed than that which followed.

The programme that Mr. Belding had suggested was carried out in later years, and Edward St. John is now, though still a young man, one of the most respected citizens of Linville. Whenever Thanksgiving-day comes around he thinks of that awful moment when his boyish hands moved the rod that saved the lives upon two crowded trains, and of the happiness which followed. Many others think of it too, and bless the name of the brave boy to whose presence of mind, under God, they owe their existence to-day.

A THANKSGIVING BUNDLE.

BY CAROLINE LE BOW.

GRANDMA is hunting the garret over.

What do you s'pose she wants to find?

She only laughed when I asked the question,

Said, "Run away, Tom, and never mind."

She pulled out some trunks and an old oak chest,

A spinning-wheel and a queer old chair;

When I told her I'd help her she looked so funny!

What do you s'pose she's doing up there?

Grandma had sent for all the children

To spend Thanksgiving with her at home;

She was keeping a secret she knew would please them,

And planned a surprise when the time should come.

Aunt Amy from Boston had brought a bundle,

She gave to grandma in such a way,

While she said with a laugh, "I've brought you something

You wanted to have for Thanksgiving-day."

"I know what it is," Tom told his cousins,

When grandma had carried it out of sight;

"It's one of those puddings that dear Aunt Amy

Knows we're so fond of—I bet I'm right!

I'm glad she brought it: there's lots of raisins,

And grandma will give us a great big slice;

But I can't think what there is up garret

For Thanksgiving-day that's very nice."

But when the children were called to dinner,

What do you suppose was waiting there?

At the end of the table they saw what grandma

Had found up garret—an old high chair,

And the cunningest baby tied within it—

The bundle Aunt Amy had brought along—

A blue-eyed, dimpling, darling cousin,

Who gravely gazed at the noisy throng.

"I see," cried Tom, as they danced, delighted,

"What grandma was hunting for so up there;

I'd never have guessed that we'd have at dinner

A baby tied in our old high chair."

And such a day as that glad Thanksgiving!

They never had had in their lives before;

They had pudding with raisins, besides the baby,

And felt that they never could want for more.

WORK FOR NIMBLE FINGERS.

A PEN-WIPER.—FIGS. 1 TO 3.

THIS pen-wiper requires a circular piece of card-board three inches in diameter, bound around the edge with black silk ribbon. The top is covered with folded leaf-



FIG. 1.

shaped points of cloth ornamented with long chain stitches of silk. The outside row is of black cloth, the inner rows of red, light blue, and dark blue. Fig. 2 shows one of the points spread out, and Fig. 3 shows it folded and fastened.

At the centre of the pen-wiper, and covering the stitches of the inside row of points, are two circular pieces of cloth, one red and one black, placed one upon the other, and fastened down



FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.

with knot stitches of yellow silk. The bottom of the pen-wiper is covered with black cloth over a thin wadding interlining.

A CROCHET SCARF.—FIGS. 4 AND 5.

This pretty scarf is easily made by any one who knows how to crochet.

It is worked with white zephyr wool and a bone crochet needle in lengthwise rows. Make a chain of 145 stitches for a foundation, fasten off, and begin at the other end. Work loosely and lightly.



FIG. 4.

1st row.—Form a loop, take a loop through the back of each of the first 3 stitches, and draw the wool through the 4 loops now on the needle. * Make a chain stitch, take a loop through the back of the chain stitch just made, take another loop through the same stitch through which the one before the last was taken, and take 2 loops through the back of the next 2 stitches, making 5 loops in all; draw the wool through these 5 together (see Fig. 5); continue to repeat from * until you reach the end of the row, then fasten off.

2d row.—Form a loop, take a loop through the first stitch in the last row, a loop through the next stitch, and another through

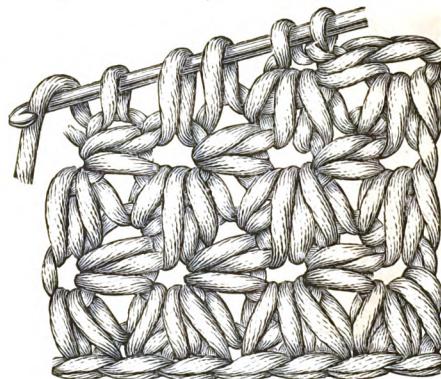


FIG. 5.

the following one, then draw the wool through the 4 loops together. * Make a chain stitch, take a loop through the back of it, then take a loop through the same stitch through which the last of the preceding 3 loops was taken, and a loop each through the next 2 stitches (see Fig. 5), draw the wool through the 5 loops on the needle, and continue to repeat from * to the end of the row. Fourteen more rows worked like the 2d finish the scarf.

Work a row of loose single crochet stitches across each end, and into these knot short strands of wool to form the fringe.

THE LOST CITY;*
OR, THE BOY EXPLORERS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

BY DAVID KER.

CHAPTER VII.

AN AFGHAN GAME OF FORFEITS.

HAPPILY for our two friends, the old Afghan's kind intentions respecting them had to remain unfulfilled for the present. Such a prize did not fall into the hands of the tribe every day, and Ahmed Khan was as careful of his prisoners as if they had been his own children while awaiting the return of the messenger whom he had sent to Cabool to treat with Colonel Hilton for their ransom.

Meanwhile their strength revived in the pure mountain air, and their wounds, which, though severe, were not dangerous, healed rapidly. Within the stronghold they were allowed to walk about as they pleased, for the gateway was always guarded, and the wall too high to be scaled. Indeed, even if they could have climbed it, they would have gained little, for on all sides but one it overhung a sheer precipice of nearly a hundred feet.

Even within these narrow limits, however, the boys found plenty to amuse them. The very first day their dinner consisted of a dish quite new to both—a real Afghan "pillau," made of a lamb roasted whole with the wool on, the entire inside being taken out, and the carcass stuffed with rice, plums, raisins, and spices. On the same evening Tom's attention was attracted by a great shouting and laughing in one corner of the camp, which proceeded from a troop of children who were playing the old Afghan game of "guarding the shoe." A shoe is laid on the ground, and defended by one side, while the other tries to carry it off. All the players hop on one foot while holding up the other with the left hand, and any one who falls or puts down the upheld foot becomes a prisoner to the opposite party. Tom and Ernest, always ready for fun, joined in on different sides, and before the game ended were the best of friends, not only with the children, but also with their fathers, who were greatly

amused to see their national game so well played by two foreign "unbelievers."

But all the band were not equally friendly to our heroes, whose presence seemed grievously to offend the elder Afghans, among whom the national hatred of "the yellow-faced English" was far greater than among the younger and more unthinking men who had formed the escort of Ahmed Khan. Foremost among those hostile to them was old Selim, the old man who had vowed their death in revenge for their having killed his brother; and as day after day passed without bringing any news of the ransom or of the Afghan sent to arrange it, Selim and his party lost no chance of declaring that the "Christian dogs" had imposed upon the chief with a lying tale, and ought to be put to death forthwith.

Thus matters stood, when one evening Selim's baby, which seemed in no way to share its father's hatred toward the two boys, who made a great pet of it, was playing on a heap of rubbish in an angle of the wall. Tom Hilton had just caught sight of it, and was running toward it, when suddenly he saw a large spotted snake glide out of a cleft in the wall, with an angry hiss, close behind the unconscious child.

With one bound Tom was between the serpent and its intended victim, just in time to receive the prong-like fang in the fleshy part of his outstretched hand. The next moment he had the snake by the throat, and with one blow of a heavy stone pounded the flat slimy head into a shapeless mass. Meanwhile the cries of the frightened infant had drawn several Afghans to the spot, including

Selim himself, who, the moment he saw what had happened, snatched up his child and rushed away with it like a madman to his own hut.

Tom's hurt was promptly looked at by a hatchet-faced old gray-beard with one eye, who acted as surgeon to the band. This learned gentleman began by holding a lighted stick* to the pin-like wound, from which flowed a thick black gout of venom, followed by drops of blood. The doctor then sucked the wound, and ended by applying to it a root which he had previously chewed into a pulp. Whether from the strength of the medicine or the weakness of the poison, Tom felt no farther inconvenience except a slight inflammation of the hurt hand.

Just as the dressing was completed, old Selim, having at length assured himself that his child was unharmed, came back as hurriedly as he had gone away.

"Christian," said he, "I vowed to make thy father childless, and lo! thou hast saved me from being childless myself. When thou hast need of aught that a man can do, think upon Selim the son of Yakoob."

But although Tom's chief enemy was thus converted into a friend, his other ill-wishers were as bitter as ever, and it was perhaps as well for the prisoners that their foes had just then something more serious to think of. For now came rumors that the English were marching upon Cabool to avenge the massacre, and that detachments of their troops had already been seen among the hills above Jelalabad.

* The same remedy is used by the African Hottentots.



Such a chance of fighting and plunder was too good to be lost, and one morning at sunrise Ahmed Khan, with a fillet of white linen inscribed with a text of the Koran wound round his sword arm to give him strength in battle, rode out of the stronghold with forty of his best men at his back. According to Afghan usage, a turban was unrolled and stretched across the gateway as a charm against evil; but by some mischance one end of it came loose, and fluttered down upon the young chief as he rode underneath it.

At this evil omen the Afghans grew pale, and old Selim, who was left in charge of the camp, implored his chief to turn back.

"What is to be *will* be," answered the Mussulman. "If I am fated to die, who can escape destiny? Come what may, my sword shall not be slack."

And away he went like a whirlwind.

A week passed without any news from him or his followers. At length, on the seventh evening, a solitary horseman was seen coming up the hill, haggard, ghastly, his gay dress all torn and soiled with dust and blood.

Instantly the whole band were around him, and a score of trembling voices asked what had befallen.

"There is but one God, and Mohammed is His prophet," said the Afghan, in a hollow voice. "The soul of Ahmed Khan is in the gardens of Behesht" (paradise), "but his body is food for the vultures of the mountain. The unbelievers' steel is red with the blood of our brothers, and I alone am escaped to tell it."

For an instant it seemed as if the dreadful tidings had turned to stone all who heard them, and then there broke forth a yell like the cry of a wounded tiger.

"Well may all go ill with us," roared a fierce-looking warrior, "when we suffer these unbelieving dogs to live among us. Upon them, brothers, and slay without mercy!"

In a moment every sword was out, and the savages came yelling around the two prisoners, who, thinking that all was over, set their backs against the wall, and looked round in desperation for some weapon that might aid them to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

But they were not left unfriended. Selim, who at the news of the chief's death had sunk down as if overwhelmed, threw himself with one bound between the boys and their assailants, and stood grimly facing the howling throng, with his terrible yataghan flashing over his head.

"Stand back!" shouted he, in a voice of thunder. "Would ye kill him who saved my child? Let one man of you lift a hand, and he shall feel how Selim's sword can bite!"

The savages hung back for a moment, and Selim, giving them no time to rally, went on in a commanding tone:

"Are you quarrelling like women when the enemy is at your gates? Yusuf, Ali, Hussein, ride down the valley; perchance ye may meet others of our brethren who have escaped from the battle. The rest of you load your guns and saddle your horses; and do thou, Mahmoud, climb the wall, and watch if there be any sign of the English unbelievers marching this way."

This last suggestion startled even the reckless Afghans, who obeyed without a word. The four fiercest of the gang being thus got rid of, and the rest too busy with their horses and arms to think of anything else, the doomed lads had a short breathing-time, and looked around them in the hope of being able to fly. But a brawny Afghan was sitting on the ladder with which Mahmoud had scaled the wall, and half a dozen others were cleaning their guns in the gateway; so there was nothing for it but to await the end of a respite which they knew could not be long.

And so it proved. No signal being given of the English approach, the human tigers gathered once more around Selim, clamoring for the blood of the captives. Selim saw that to resist would only cause an immediate conflict, in

which he and the three or four men who supported him (for nearly all the friendly Afghans had perished with their chief) would have no chance of saving the prisoners, and he resolved to try a stratagem.

"Brothers," cried he, "why should true believers quarrel about foreign infidels? If it be their fate to fall by your swords, it can be soon decided. Let us have a game at 'Pasha Wuzeeree,' and he who becomes 'Wuzeer' shall decide their destiny."

This proposal was received with a shout of approval by the Afghans, who, hasty and capricious as children, were delighted with the novel idea of deciding the fate of their captives by their favorite game.

"Pasha Wuzeeree" somewhat resembles our own game of "forfeits," differing from it, however, in being played with dice. It is regulated by three casts, viz., "Ameer" (King), "Wuzeer" (Prime Minister), and "Ghal" (thief). The fourth throw (farmer) counts for nothing. The players go on casting until one throws King and another Minister, before which no throw is allowed to count. When both are placed, the next who throws "thief" is seized by the Minister, who leads him up to the King, saying, "I've caught a thief." The King asks, "What has he done?" and the Minister makes some absurd answer, such as "He has stolen his sister's coat," or "He has plucked a horse's feathers off." The King then sentences the culprit to some punishment as absurd as his supposed crime, and so the game proceeds, with great shouting and laughter over every fresh forfeit.

As if on purpose to tantalize those whose doom hung upon it, the game on this occasion moved unusually slowly. It was long before any one threw King, and still longer before the cast of Minister came. But at length Selim threw Minister.

The old warrior's face brightened, it being his plan to sentence the next man who cast "thief" to guard the prisoners with his life; and the "King" being one of his own party, was quite ready to assist the scheme. But fortune was against him. The very next throw was "King," and the rules of the game obliged the existing King to yield his place to the new one, while in another moment a new Minister ousted Selim, who bit his lip savagely as he gave up his place.

"I've caught a thief!" cried the Minister, seizing a man who had just thrown "thief."

"What has he done?"

"Spared the lives of two unbelievers."

"Let him take his sword, then, and kill them both."

Selim attempted to spring up, but stumbled and fell. The Afghan seized his sword with the intention of making his forfeit good; but before the blow could fall there came a sudden and startling interruption.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NANNIE'S THANKSGIVING.

BY THOMAS OAKES CONANT.

I.

NANNIE was six years old when the Revolutionary war began. She was a bright-faced, golden-haired little girl, who lived with her grandparents in the old town of Machias, Maine, which was then a part of the colony of Massachusetts Bay.

Nannie's father, Captain Jerry O'Brien, had sailed the ocean for many a long year in his good ship *Jeannette*. He was known far and wide as a brave and skillful seaman, and wonderful tales were told along the coast, among sea-faring folk, of his daring and gallantry in battling with the storms that swept the Atlantic, or with the more cruel pirates who sailed the seas in search of booty.

The Captain was mightily proud of his stanch and tidy vessel, and when on shore would spin yarns by the

hour together about her splendid behavior in trying circumstances; and Nannie, sitting by his side with wondering eyes, was never tired of hearing him sound the praises of his noble ship.

But proud as Captain O'Brien was of his ship, he was a thousand times prouder and fonder of the dear little motherless maid who was growing up like a lovely flower in Grandma's quiet home. She was his only child. Her mother had died when she was two years old, and dear Grandma O'Brien had taken the child to her heart and home, to care for her during the Captain's long voyages to distant ports.

Every time Captain O'Brien returned Nannie seemed to him fairer and sweeter than when he had last parted with her, and he began to long for the day when he could retire from the sea and settle down on shore, so that he might be always with her. For though a rough and hardy sailor, and a little too eager sometimes to risk a brush with any foeman that came across his path, he was as tender-hearted as he was brave, and loved his "baby," as he fondly called her, with an almost passionate devotion. But that happiness was not to be for a long, long while.

One bright October day, after a brief visit to his home, Captain O'Brien sailed away on what he thought would be a four or five months' voyage. But this time, in addition to the perils which must always be encountered on the great deep, there were other dangers almost as great to be dreaded. War had broken out between the American colonies and England. Although Captain O'Brien's vessel was a simple merchantman, yet in these troubled times the English men-of-war would not hesitate to attack her, and she would be regarded as a rich prize, and as fairly belonging to the spoils of war.

Nannie bade her father good-by with more than usual tenderness. She was growing older, and realized more keenly the perils of his undertakings. Besides, she felt a strange anxiety and dread such as she had never before experienced. It seemed as if she were looking into his dear face for the last time, and her girlish heart was wrung with secret fears of which she would not for the world have let him know. So with a smile on her lips, but with tears in her blue eyes, which would come in spite of her, she clung to him and kissed him, until he said in his bluff way, but with a suspicious huskiness in his voice:

"Tut, tut, my Nannie, would you have me stay at home like a lazy land-lubber, while bolder men brave the perils of the sea?"

With one more hug and kiss, she answered proudly, "No, indeed, dear father: you know I would not."

And so they parted. Nannie watched the *Jeannette* drift slowly down with the tide, until darkness came on and shut the white sails from her sight. Then she hurried to her little chamber, where even kind Grandma could not see her tears, and cried as if her heart would break.

II.

Days, weeks, and months went by. The good ships came and went; battles were fought, victories won, and defeats suffered, but nothing was heard of the *Jeannette*.

Five months, six months passed, yet still no tidings. But news travelled slowly in those days, and Nannie, wondering at the strange silence, went about her wonted household tasks, expecting every day to hear. Seven, eight months dragged along, and then came news. The *Jeannette*, while in the Bay of Biscay, had been chased by a British frigate in a heavy gale, and in trying to escape had run on the rocks and gone to pieces, and every soul on board was lost.

Such was the sad story brought to Machias by a sailor, who had been a prisoner on board the English frigate, and witnessed the disaster. At first Nannie would not, could not believe it true. Then the remembrance of her foreboding when her father went away came back upon

her with double force, and she was almost ready to give way to despair. She had often heard older people speak of a "presentiment" as something sure to come to pass, and she said, mournfully, to herself, "Oh, it was surely a presentiment, and I shall never, never see my dear father again."

Grandma O'Brien was very kind and tender in her treatment of the little girl. Sometimes she tried to comfort her with the thought that her father, who was an expert swimmer, might have succeeded in overcoming the hungry waves, and escaping to land. Again she would say: "At any rate, my child, your father was a good man, and if he could not escape the sea, he is now safe with your dear mother in the blessed haven above."

Somehow Nannie's troubled heart could not find as much comfort in this view of the case as in the other. In the solitude of her own room, or when resting in her favorite seat by the shore, she tried to picture to herself her father's strong arms buffeting the terrible breakers, and struggling successfully to land, and then his joyful return to his dear home and Nannie. Yet as week after week glided away, and the well-meaning neighbors spoke gently to her, with bated breath, of the "departed," hope grew fainter, until she was almost tempted even to cease praying for his return. But she could never quite bring herself to that. "Perhaps he is living yet," her heart would cry out, "and I must pray for him until I know he isn't."

Summer came and went. Autumn, with its store of ripened fruits and glowing tints, deepened into early winter. Despite the cruel presence of war in the land, the farmers' barns and cellars were filled with plenty; and wherever the country was free from the invading armies the people made ready to celebrate the time-honored feast of Thanksgiving-day. Such bustle of preparation as prevailed in every house! such chopping of mince-meat, such baking of pies and cakes, such frying of doughnuts, such fattening of turkeys and chickens—what pen can do justice to the theme!

At last the day came—the one glad day of all the year to the staid and sober Puritan, when the solemnity of even the most solemn visage relaxed, when good cheer ruled in every household, and when families gathered under the old home roof-tree to give thanks to the gracious All-Giver for the blessing of the garnered harvest.

Poor Nannie! She had done her part bravely in the busy labors that go before the annual feast. But many a secret tear had stolen down her cheeks as she bent over the savory dishes her deft hands had made. It was more than a year since her father sailed, and now the Day had dawned on which, except the last, he had always managed to be at home. The old house was full to overflowing with uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives to the third and fourth degree. White-haired grandsir, with a tremulous smile on his aged lips, was trying hard to be cheerful himself and to make others happy, while the memory of his brave son would bring the tears unbidden to his dim eyes. Grandma, more bustling and active than he, kept herself too busy to weep; but now and then her kind hand would steal over poor Nannie's golden tresses as she hurried past, in so caressing and tender a way that the child was nearly overcome with her pent-up grief.

At the appointed hour all went in solemn array to the meeting-house, where prayers and psalms of thanksgiving were offered up, and a mighty sermon, two hours long, was preached, so that every one was made devoutly ready for the good things awaiting them at home.

But Nannie, as they returned, stole quietly down to the beach for one more lingering look toward the sea, and one more simple prayer—alas! a sadly pathetic, unhopeful one now—before the cloth was spread. There was a vessel working slowly up the bay with all sails set; but Nannie knew it would be some time before it reached the wharf. So, brushing the tears from her eyes and hurry-

ing to the house, she plunged resolutely into the business of the hour.

The table was soon laid, the smoking viands were placed upon it, and grandsir's trembling voice gave thanks. No trifling offering sufficed for so solemn an occasion! The Giver of every good gift must not be put off with a mumbled word, when an hour or two was to be given to bodily feasting. The old man *dwelt* upon the mercies of the year. He counted them up in order, and enlarged upon them, and praised the Lord for them, while the rest stood reverently with bowed heads, young and old together, till the prayer should end. But when, with lower tone and deeper feeling, he prayed that the manifold blessings of the year might yet be crowned with a richer joy—the return of the absent son and father to his loved ones, safe and sound—

when a strong deep voice outside of the house took up the bass at the concluding line.

Nannie's quick ear caught the sound, and with flying feet she came bounding from her room. Before the wondering questions at the table were half spoken she was out of the house. There was one wild scream of delight, and Nannie was locked in her father's arms.

III.

As soon as the first surprise and joy at the Captain's return had calmed down a little they all sat down to dinner, which lost nothing of its good cheer from the brief interruption. The Captain ate with an appetite sharpened by his sea-voyage, but Nannie, too happy to think of eating, sat watching her father with beaming eyes as he told of his wonderful escape from the angry sea.

When the *Jeannette* went down, he said, he was thrown on the rocks, and knew nothing more until he found himself lying on a soft bed in a cozy little room which opened out on a lovely garden. Afar off he heard the sound of music, more delicious than his ears had ever heard, even in dear New England.

At first he thought he was in paradise, and that the song was the heavenly chorus of "Moses and the Lamb." But presently a door opened and a black-robed nun stole noiselessly in. When she saw he was awake she said something in a foreign tongue, which he could only answer with a smile and a look of gratitudo.

She quickly retired, and in a moment returned with a cup of delicious chocolate and a large biscuit, which she dipped in the chocolate and gave him to eat. How good it tasted to the sick man!

Afterward he learned enough of the language to find out what had happened to him, and how he came to be in so good hands.

He had been cast on shore by the waves, apparently dead, and was picked up by fishermen and carried to the Convent of St. Ursula, hard by, where he was tenderly nursed by the good Sisters until life and health returned. But a severe wound in his side was slow to heal, and it was many weeks before he was in fit condition to travel.

At last, however, he was able to set out for home. Taking grateful leave of his kind nurses, he journeyed by slow stages to Paris, where he was heartily welcomed by the American ambassador, Dr. Benjamin Franklin. Before long he sailed for America in a French war vessel bearing troops and supplies to the struggling colonists. And so, like one restored from the grave, he returned at length, in time to give a new and more joyful meaning to "Nannie's Thanksgiving."



"NANNIE WAS LOCKED IN HER FATHER'S ARMS."

poor Nannie's heart gave way, and with a sudden sob she left her place and sought refuge in her own room.

At Grandma's request no one followed her, and the accustomed Thanksgiving hymn was raised. It was a curious hymn, one of those rude versions of the Psalms in which our pious forefathers delighted, but which we irreverent folk could hardly sing without unseemly laughter. But they saw no absurdity in its quaint expressions, and sang it with serious earnestness to a sounding fugue. They had reached this stanza—

"Ye monsters of the mighty deep,
Your Maker's praises spout;
Up from the deep, ye codlins leap,
And wag your tails about!"



A SINGULAR RIVER.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

WITH his fingers locked tightly in his crisp, curly hair, Jackman Rolf—Jack, for short—sat resting his elbows on the table, which supported a canvas-covered copy of *Horsberg's Sailing Directions*, on one of the open pages of which his eyes were steadfastly fixed.

Opposite him, in a similar attitude, was his brother, Sylvester, now in his fourteenth year, was two years younger than Jack. Before Sylvester lay a well-worn *Physical Geography*, open at the map of South America. He was supposed to be studying his day's lesson. In reality his mind was "far, far at sea." For Jack Rolf, who, as every one declared, was "a born sailor," had just returned from his first voyage with his father, Captain Merrill Rolf. He was full of enthusiasm for his new life, and could talk of little else but the sea and everything connected with it, to all of which Sylvester listened eagerly, particularly as Jack, being a keen observer, and possessing a good memory, was a most delightful talker.

"I say, Jack."

No answer. In fancy Jack was again clinging to the *Paul Revere's* weather mizzen-rigging, as she scudded at lightning speed before a terrible cyclone which they had encountered on the return passage. And Jack, aided by the map before him, was mentally comparing the route over which they had sailed, to escape running into the dreaded storm centre, with the route there laid down.

"Jack!" this time rather louder.

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the dreamy answer. And then, with a sudden start, Jack came back to his home surroundings—to the old-fashioned furniture, and his dead mother's picture over the mantel, and Sylvester opposite him yawning over his lesson.

"Well, what is it, Sillybub?" Jack asked, good-naturedly.

"I should like to sail up the Amazon, the biggest river in the world," replied Syl, glancing at the map. He didn't really care in the least about the Amazon, but he wanted to make Jack talk.

"Three weeks ago I crossed a bigger and wider river than the Amazon ever pretended to be," said Jack, briskly, as, shutting the cover of his book with a bang, he leaned back in his chair and softly whistled an old sea-song.

"Why, Jack Rolf!" exclaimed Sylvester. "Three weeks ago you were at sea."

"Yes," replied Jack, calmly, as he fixed his gaze on the fly-studded ceiling, "and it is altogether different from any river that I ever saw or heard of."

"How?" questioned Sylvester, curious to get at Jack's meaning.

"Oh, every way," was the somewhat indefinite answer. "In the first place," Jack continued, slowly, "it flows in a sort of immense circle—"

"A river flowing in a circle!" scornfully interrupted Sylvester.

"—And there is one part of it," pursued his brother, "that for quite a long distance—some hundreds of miles, I think—flows up-hill."

"Oh, no doubt," was the ironical response. "Anything else?" Sylvester had managed by a great effort to gulp down—if I may so express it—the circular flow of this wonderful river, but the up-hill movement was rather too much of a strain.

"Anything else?" repeated Jack—"oh yes, lots. No matter how cold it is," he went on, gravely, "this river I speak of never freezes, for two reasons: one is that the water is almost warm, and the other, because it won't stop running long enough for Jack Frost to get his grip on it, for there is always a three or four knot current or tide."

"I don't see how it can run when it's all *tied*," interrupted Sylvester, with inward delight at being able to re-

member and bring into active service an old newspaper joke:

Jack cast a pitying glance at his brother, but made no reply to such an ill-timed attempt at wit.

"The river of which I speak has no one definite source or outlet, though it branches out in two or three directions. Another curious fact is that while its surface is exactly level with the top of its banks, it has never been known to overflow them during the heaviest rain-falls, or to lower the fraction of an inch during the driest seasons."

"Are its banks mud, or gravel, or rock, or what?" inquired Sylvester, who was thoroughly mystified.

"Neither," his brother replied, gravely. "Banks and bottom alike are of cold salt-water."

"Gulf Stream!" exclaimed Sylvester, upon whose mind the truth had suddenly dawned. "What a goose I was not to have known what you were driving at long ago!"

Opening the thick canvas-covered book in which he had been reading, Jack called his brother to his side, and directed his attention to a diagram of the eastern and western continents.

"Away down there, near the South American coast," said Jack, pointing to the spot with his finger, "the big Amazon is all the time pouring an immense volume of water into the sea, which lies sweltering under a tropic sun."

"Don't understand how the sea can 'swelter,'" broke in his irrepressible brother.

"That, my boy, is simply a figure of speech," was the unmoved answer. "But to continue. This sun-warmed current, following the shore-line at a distance, passes through and carries with it the heated waters from what some scientific person has called the two great caldrons—the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. It then enters the Florida Straits, where some say that the Gulf Stream proper fairly commences, because here are its first two definite boundaries—Cape Sable on the one hand, and the island of Cuba with the Bahamas on the other."

"But whereabouts does it begin to run up-hill?"

"Not far from Cape Sable," Jack replied, "though perhaps the expression that I used was rather too strong. What I meant was that the Coast Survey soundings have shown a gradual rise from this point, where the stream is about thirty miles wide, clear up to Cape Hatteras, where it is more than twice that width."

"And why does the Gulf Stream always run to the north and east?"

"Well," replied Jack, slowly, "there are different theories on that point. The daily motion of the earth from east to west has something to do with it. Then, again, it is claimed that the waters of the Gulf Stream and its tributaries are saltier than the sea which hemns it in, consequently evaporation takes place faster, so that the water is always hurrying in to take the place of that which the thirsty trade-winds are lapping up. And perhaps the trade-winds, blowing steadily from the northeast, help to force this moving body of water in the direction of the Caribbean Sea."

And then, by the aid of diagrams, Jack showed his brother how this wonderful river in the sea, after following our own coast-line for hundreds of miles, splits in sunder above the fortieth parallel of latitude.

"This branch runs up to the northward and eastward," said Jack, pointing out the tiny arrow-heads marking its course, "while the other, tending due east, at last overflows its banks of salt sea, and is spread out over thousands of square miles along the European shores. Then describing a grand sweep, of which mid-ocean might be called the middle, it helps form the great equatorial current which in turn is swept toward the Caribbean Sea."

"But, Jack," said his brother, with a puzzled look, "why don't the Gulf Stream water mix with the ocean?"

"Well," Jack slowly replied, "that is pretty hard for me to explain, because I don't fully understand it myself.

But as nearly as I do understand it," he continued, "it's something on the same principle as the fact that hot and cold water don't unite in a dish till they're, so to speak, stirred up together pretty thoroughly. And then they say that bodies of water of different densities won't mix readily, which is another reason, for the Gulf Stream is considerably saltier than the ocean which hemms it in. But just see, Syl," Jack went on, warming with his subject—"just see how beautifully the Creator makes everything pull together, so to speak. Now the earth is a conductor of heat, you know."

Sylvester didn't know, but nodded his assent, and Jack went on:

"Well, if the Gulf Stream flowed directly over the bottom of the sea, it would soon lose its temperature. But the Almighty has so arranged it that away up in the northern regions a polar current is set in motion, and comes sweeping down to meet the Gulf Stream somewhere near the Grand Banks. When it strikes the warm current it sinks to the bottom, and so puts itself between the Stream and the bottom of the ocean, so that the water is kept at exactly the proper temperature."

"But what's the use of the Gulf Stream, anyway?" persisted Sylvester.

"Use of it!" echoed Jack; "I guess this would be a pretty uncomfortable country to live in if there was no Gulf Stream. Only for this current to carry away the heated water from the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea, the whole region down there would be a parched, sun-baked, dried-up desert, where no one could live nor anything grow. And the same excess of heat that it brings away from the torrid zone is spread out where it is most needed further north. It tempers our own climate to a slight extent, but its greatest power is felt across the ocean. But for the warmth it scatters broadcast in its eastern sweep, the British Islands, which are in the same latitude as Labrador, would freeze up solid, and France might have sleighing all the year round, for aught I know. Then, again, vessels bound from Southern to Northern ports get the advantage of its two and three knot current, and in winter, when they are 'iced up' on our own coast, a few hours' sailing brings them into warm water, which melts off the ice and thaws out the sailors. Oh, I can tell you, Syl," said Jack, drawing his lecture to a close, as he caught his brother hiding a yawn, "the Gulf Stream is a great institution."

And as Sylvester came to think it all over afterward, he was of the same opinion.

A BARMECIDE FEAST.

A Game for Thanksgiving Evening.

BY G. B. BARTLETT,

AUTHOR OF "NEW GAMES FOR PARLOR AND LAWN."

After all the good things we have had at dinner—the turkey and plum-pudding, the pies and puddings, and bonbons—how shall we spend the evening? After all this feasting, will not a Barmecide feast be just the thing? We will go to work, like the famous Barmecide in the *Arabian Nights*, and arrange a splendid entertainment, which we will enjoy, even though we have only imaginary dainties to regale ourselves upon.

The company must sit at one end of the room, across the middle of which two shawls are hung to form a curtain. This curtain may be opened and closed simply by lifting the shawls by the lower corners, which touch the floor in front, and by dropping them into place when the scene requires. Two persons are needed to manage these shawls.

Two other players are next chosen as head cooks, who select as many actors for each scene as they require, taking care to give to each person an equal chance to act.

When all is ready, the cook calls his company behind the curtain to prepare some article of food, the name of which can be acted by following the sound of each syllable, even though it may be in the most absurd and far-fetched manner. He then announces to the company the nature of the dish by saying,

"We will begin our feast with a soup."

After this he states the number of plates—or syllables—in which they are to take it, and proceeds to exhibit it at once.

No one must guess until all the scenes have been acted.

The other cook then calls his actors, and proceeds to furnish a second dish, choosing always something that naturally follows what has gone before.

The scenes may be acted in tableau, charade, pantomime, or opera, with or without preparation; but as an impromptu dialogue is always more pleasing and natural than one which has been studied, only the idea need be given, leaving the conversation to the inspiration of the moment.

A SOUP, IN THREE PLATES.

Scene 1.—A French dancing-master is giving instruction to some young ladies for the opera. He plays the violin by means of a racket and a cane. They take many steps, and whirl about upon their heels; he insists that they learn to turn on one toe. They practice earnestly, and follow each other in line. He still insists upon the use of the toe, and whirls in front of them, stopping suddenly. Each of the dancers tries to imitate him, but in so doing steps heavily upon the toe of the unfortunate master, who goes limping off, holding his foot in his hand, while all waltz madly round until the curtain falls.

Scene 2.—A little girl is asleep on a couch, covered with drapery. A group of children dressed in white, with bright garlands of flowers, enter. A ring is formed around the couch. The child sits up and rubs her eyes, as if dreaming. Two of the taller girls go behind the couch, and place a crown of flowers on the head of the dreamer, while the others kneel before her. They sing the following

ODE TO MAY.

Bring out my thickest flannels and my rubbers, granny dear,
For this will be the chilliest day of all the glad new year—
Of all the glad new year, granny, the bleakest, coldest day
That ever you have seen, granny. I'm to be Queen of the May.

With a wreath of paper roses upon my sneezing head,
O'er damp and dewy meadows my footsteps will be led
Where the cow slips in the pasture, so boggy is the ground,
With all the misery-be-anthum, and the snow drops all around.

The pine-clad hills around me enjoy their nice warm furs,
And the little pussy willow along the brook-side purrs.
I need not gather knots of flowers—the wind makes my nose gay;
The end so bright, like a beacon-light, will cheer the first of May.

Scene 3.—An old gentleman sits in an easy-chair. He wears a cap and dressing-gown, like an invalid, and has one foot bandaged and propped up on an ottoman. The doctor comes in, and he complains bitterly of his toe. The pain is all "in his toe," and he groans and makes a great fuss. The doctor tells him there is nothing the matter, and in examining the toe happens to strike it a blow against the ottoman. The old gentleman hops around on one foot in great agony, screaming, "My toe! my toe!" The curtain falls.

The whole word, "Tomato," is then guessed by the spectators. The second cook chooses his company, and announces,

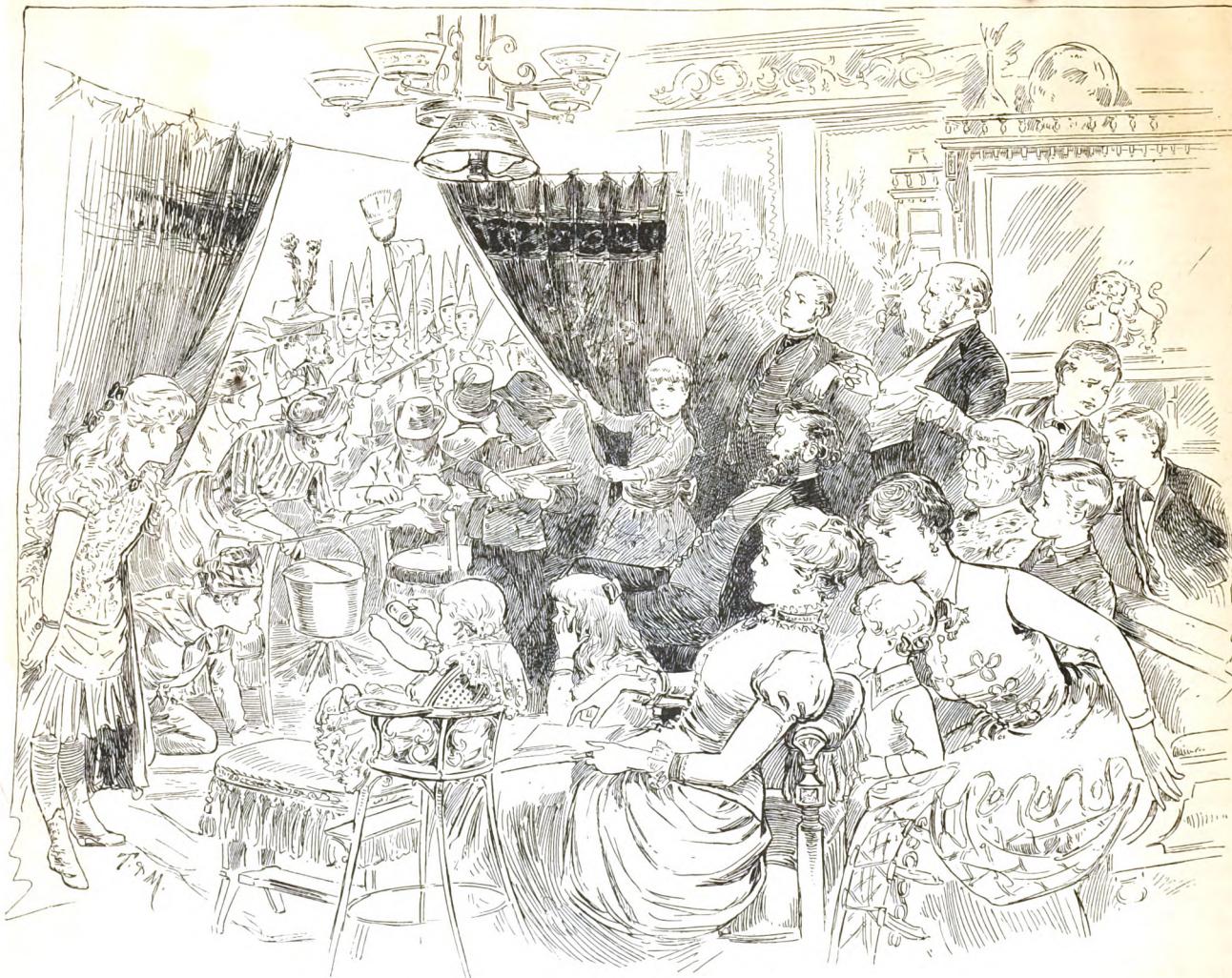
A FOWL, IN TWO PLATES.

Scene 1.—Cushions, mats, carpets, and rugs strew the floor, and are draped over the furniture. A large man, with long beard, and flowing robes of curtains, wears a huge white turban, and sits cross-legged on a divan in the centre of the room. Slaves enter, and make salaams before him. He makes a sign, and two of the attendants drag in a captive, who kneels before the Sultan. Orders are given to execute him. They wind a rope around his neck, and proceed to pull on the ends of it, when the daughter enters, and entreats her father to spare the life of the captive. After much persuasion, the sentence of imprisonment is substituted for that of death, and the culprit is hurried away by the attendants, two of whom soon return, and with low bows approach the Sultan. One of them hands him a key, which he hangs on his belt by a gold chain; he then dismisses the attendants by a wave of the hand. The daughter kneels, and covers her face to hide her tears.

Scene 2.—The same scene as before. The daughter is still trying in vain to persuade her father to relent. He seems at last worn out by her importunities, and angrily bids her to furnish him some music. She goes out and returns with a guitar, and tries for a long time to tune it to accord with her voice, and makes several attempts to sing on the same note without success. At last she begins a dull and monotonous air, and observes that her father begins to nod and grow sleepy. At this she sings on a lower key, and continues until the old man falls sound asleep, and leans over upon his cushions. She then takes the key from his belt very cautiously, and goes out on tiptoe. She soon returns, leading the prisoner, whom she sends away with many cautions not to disobey again her father's commands. The captive seems very happy and grateful for his release, and bids her good-by, with many promises of amendment, and the daughter takes her place behind her father, and holds the key above his head in triumph.

The curtain falls, and "Turkey" is guessed.

The next set of players then propose to furnish



"A VEGETABLE IN THREE SLICES."—FIRST SLICE.

JELLY IN TWO SPOONFULS.

Scene 1.—A city street. A very stylishly dressed lady is walking along, with a string in her hand, which she pulls upon from time to time; at last she gives a very hard pull, and the end of the line appears, to which a small dog collar is tied. She seems very much excited at the loss of her favorite dog, and asks every one who goes past if he has seen her pet. She at last salutes a crusty old gentleman, who is very unwilling to reply, and after some high words, he blames her for her folly in making so much fuss over the loss of a miserable cur. At this remark the lady is overcome with anger and astonishment, and cries out, "Oh, that I should have lived to hear my beautiful Fido called a cur!" She faints into the arms of an apple woman who enters with her basket on her arm.

Scene 2.—A tragedy is being rehearsed by a company of amateurs, each one of whom claims the principal rôle, and to show his or her fitness for the part, all recite some poem or dramatic passage. At first they recite their selections one at a time, appealing to the others to listen to them, but soon, finding no auditors, all proceed to declaim at once with all their might, and using the most absurd gestures. At length a person who has been sitting at a small table at the left, with his hands held over his ears, as if distracted by the noise, tries to make himself heard, and begs them to proceed one at a time, in order that he may be able to form some idea of the powers and style of each individual. Each one then in turn tries to do justice to the soliloquy of Hamlet, by reciting as much of it as he can readily remember, in the most unnatural manner possible, until the manager informs them that not one is suited for any part in any play. Each actor then assumes an attitude of disgust.

The curtain falls as the word "Currant" is guessed.

A VEGETABLE IN THREE SLICES.

Scene 1.—The curtain rises on a camp of gypsies, who are preparing their evening meal. Some busily stir the fragrant soup;

little children bring sticks, and prepare to light the fire as the hunters enter with their game, and all chant some gay song. Shouts are heard, and all seem filled with fear. The men pretend to fire their guns, and some soldiers enter, and take seven of the gypsies prisoner. One of them, however, hides behind the firewood, and an old woman puts the iron pot over his head to conceal it from view.

Scene 2.—The same group of prisoners stand with their hands bound, and the soldiers are preparing to lead them away, when a messenger enters, and says there should be eight of them. Where is the other? A vigorous search then ensues, and at last the messenger sees the pot move. He kicks it over, and discovers the culprit, and leads away the complete number, after carefully counting them.

Scene 3.—The gypsy camp is deserted by all but the women and children, who set up a prolonged howl of despair, by screaming "Oh!" but afterward the captives return, and are received with great rejoicing by the mourners, who again express their feelings in a joyful "Oh!"

The curtain falls, and "Potato" is guessed.

The players go on to act the names of as many viands and table ornaments as possible. When they grow tired of the amusement, or the hour for breaking up has come, a vote is taken as to which word was best represented.

This ballot is secret. Each member of the company writes the name of the word he approves on a slip of paper. These slips are collected in a plate, and counted, after being assorted.

The cook who planned the successful scenes is then decorated with a medal of honor made of a thin round cake, which he receives with the homage of his admiring friends, who crowd around him with congratulations.

Dozens of words can be found by any ingenious boy or girl, which are as suitable for the purpose as those given as examples. The more strained the meaning, the funnier the scenes will appear, and every home will furnish an abundance of costumes and furniture for the furnishing of the feast.



HARRY HAS A HORRID TIME THANKSGIVING-NIGHT.



THE BUTTERFLY.

The butterfly, an idle thing,
Nor honey makes, nor yet can sing,
As do the bee and bird;
Nor does it, like the prudent ant,
Lay up the grain for times of want,
A wise and cautious hoard.

My youth is but a summer's day:
Then, like the bee and ant, I'll lay
A store of learning by;
And though from flower to flower I rove,
My stock of wisdom I'll improve,
Nor be a butterfly.

OUR POST-OFFICE BOX.

THANKSGIVING.

Did you ever hear, dear girls and boys, something which a quaint old writer, the famous Matthew Henry, said about Thanksgiving? If not, listen, and let me tell you, for I think you will not forget his idea if once you hear it. It was that the best thanksgiving is just thanksgiving. Do you understand his meaning? Then, Hannah and Jennie, Reuben and Arthur, Dick and Daisy, if you do, you will never, never go about frowning, or pouting, or finding fault when little things vex you, but will always wear sunny faces, and make those around you as happy as you can.

And now, my pets, here is your own little Thanksgiving hymn, which the Postmistress has written for you, and which she hopes you will like to read, sing, or recite:

A SONG.

For sowing and reaping, for cold and for heat,
For sweets of the flowers, and gold of the wheat,
For ships in the harbors, for sails on the sea,
O Father in heaven, our songs rise to Thee.

For parents who care for us day after day,
For sisters and brothers, for work and for play,
For dear little babies so helpless and fair,
O Father we send Thee our praise and our prayer.

For teachers who guide us so patiently on,
For frolic with mates when our lessons are done,
For shelter and clothing, for every day's food,
We bless Thee, our Father, the giver of good.

For peace and for plenty, for freedom, for rest,
For joy in the land from the east to the west,
For the dear starry flag, with its red, white, and
blue.

We thank Thee from hearts that are honest and
true.

For waking and sleeping, for all that we see,
We children would offer our praises to Thee;
For God is our Father, and bends from above
To keep the round world in the smile of His love.

BIARRITZ, FRANCE.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—Your kind words at the bottom of my first letter make me feel a little encouraged, so I write again. Do you know, you seem to me like a sweet friend, and I am sure you must be very nice, you say such pleasant things to your little correspondents. Now I will tell you about our trip from Kreuznach to Biarritz. The first day we went to Nancy, which is a lovely French town with eight large, handsome gates, and beautiful fountains and churches. We saw a chapel after the style of the Medici Chapel in Florence, where the Dukes of Lorraine are buried, where Louis XV. and Louis XVI. and Maria Theresa and Marie Antoinette (as a tablet said) had been to "meditate." I am not sure but they will add Tom's and my name to the list.

My meditation was, How ugly some of these dukes and duchesses must have been!

Then we went to Paris, and saw many things we did not see when we were there before. They have taken down the centre part of the Tuilleries which was burned by the mob. We went to the Louvre. I made a sketch of Greuze's "Girl with the Broken Pitcher." At the Salon we saw the pictures of the modern French artists; some were very nice, and some again seemed to me just the contrary. As you entered the building it was like a garden filled with statuary, but with walls colored with dark red, and sofas and chairs all about, but grass and flower beds here and there; upstairs were the galleries for the pictures. We went to the panorama of the siege of Paris in 1870; we went up a pretty dark stairway, and we came on to a platform, and the picture made a circle around us, and as we turned and walked around it seemed as though the country about Paris was around us, and fighting going on all sides. It looked so real I could hardly believe it was a picture—the ambulance wagons with a red cross on them, the camp fires, the wounded and dead men, the knapsacks and caps scattered about, and dying horses; the smoke in the distance was like life; and I was glad when we went down the stairs into Paris, because then I thought the war was over. We went to Notre Dame and the Pantheon, and mamma told me about the hunchback of Notre Dame. We went to the Conciergerie to see where Marie Antoinette was confined before her execution, but could not get in.

After a few days we left Paris, and went through a beautifully cultivated country, with miles and miles of vineyards; they were picking grapes, but we had hard work to buy any at the stations. A little bunch would cost twelve cents. We spent one night at Bordeaux, which we did not see much of, as the pouring rain prevented. From there to Bayonne the country was flat, with a great many pine-trees. In some of the marshy parts of the country we saw people walking on stilts strapped to their legs, with a long pole in their hands. As we neared Bayonne the country improved. If I am not mistaken, Bayonne was never taken in war, and was the only city that would not take a part in the St. Bartholomew massacre. Oh! I remember a picture, in the Salon, of Catherine de' Medici coming out of the Louvre the morning after the massacre, looking so haughty and yet proud when she saw the dead bodies lying about her.

When we arrived in Biarritz, which is on the Bay of Biscay and the border of Spain, the rain was pouring down, but from our salon window we could view the sea, rocks, and light-house, and Tom and I made sketches of them. Now we have a little house of our own. The waves are something beautiful when they dash over the rocks. The sea has worn great big holes through some of the rocks, and comes spouting through them like high fountains. There are many Spanish men and women on the beach. There is nothing to say about the women, but the men are dressed in the costume of Aragon and other parts of Spain. Some of them have on a "robin's-egg blue" velvet suit, the jacket being short, so as just to come a little above the waist; in front they have red embroidery on the jacket; below the jacket there comes a broad red piece of cashmere twisted around the waist, and in this sash they wear daggers and knives to sell; then comes some more robin's-egg blue trousers, which come to a little above the knee, and are open on the sides, with silver filigree buttons; then a white pair of full drawers, which the just below the knee. The stockings are of a light gray; the man said they cost forty francs. You may wonder that a pair of stockings should cost so much, but they last a life-time; they wear short socks over them, white or colored, and sandals, kept on to their feet by straps of worsted stuff. On their heads they wear either a black kind of turban or a silk band twisted round. A man told mamma that the Spaniards did not want a king, but a republic, and Portugal and Italy did too—that all countries wanted a republic; but he did not know where the United States were; he thought it was either in South America or Mexico!

I live a prosperous life here, because the doctor says I must not have any lessons, which delights my heart, but poor Tom has to grind at German and French. I send you some Edelweiss I bought on the Rigi. It is a national, dearly prized flower of Switzerland. The Swiss lover brings it from the mountain-tops under the edge of the glacier to his lady-love, and as long as she keeps this flower she keeps his love, but woe to her if she loses it! I hope you will never lose it, but love the giver. Good-by. I will write you again some time—no stated time is ever given in my life. Tom sends love. There is a queer little French boy in this house, the son of the "concierge"; he looks like a frog.

As I have been ill this week, and must not tire myself, I got Jean to write this letter for me.

KATIE R.

Many thanks, dear, for the Edelweiss. I hope you will very soon be well again, and in the mean time, as you have no lessons, you might keep a journal of the various interesting visits you make, and now and then cull some extracts for the Post-office Box.

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN.

You printed my letter of two years ago. Shall I write again?

Cozy is here yet, and we have Honor, one of her last spring kittens. Cozy and I are always quite willing to keep a kitten, while papa and mamma thought he could take Cozy's place here at home and let her go to the store to live. Cozy has tried the store, and is home again to stay the rest of her days. Papa told me such beautiful stories about what splendid times she would have racing after the mice, and finding great rats in the cellar, and how she would go into the office and cuddle down in his waste-basket instead of the cat that comes there for a nap every day from the next store, and how she would purr and sing to him while he priced the books or wrote his letters, and finally, last Monday noon, I let him shut her into the old market basket and take her to the store. When papa came home at night he told me he feared Cozy had run away, for no one had seen her. He left her purring, and eating the lamb-chops I had tucked in the basket with her, up in the sundry room at noon, and when the men came no one could find her anywhere. No one had seen her Tuesday noon, and then papa said I might go in the street cars after school to see if I could find her, for I could not think of anything but dear Cozy, and what a sad time she was having, and how grieved she would feel at such treatment. So as soon as the afternoon hour at school was over I went down to the store alone in the car, which I never did before, and papa went upstairs with me, and I called "Cozy," "dear Cozy," on every floor, among all the boxes and barrels and baubles. When we had nearly reached the end of the fourth floor, and I was calling "Cozy, dear Cozy, Nellie has come for you," what should we hear but a little faint mew, and then we saw two shining eyes, and Cozy ran and jumped into my arms, and purred like anything, and I held her closely until the ache went out of her little heart. Then we took her down in the elevator, and I showed her to Patsy and all the men who knew she was not in the store, and she purred for them, all safe in my arms, while they stroked her soft fur. Honor is a very nice cat, with the same lovely Maltese fur and gentle ways, but he is not Cozy, and can never take her place.

I was intending to write to you last Saturday, but I had a school party and did not have time. The three teachers and the children in my room, and some of my other friends, came to it. The children swung in the doorway swing, and played with the big doll-house in the conservatory, and the little doll-house, and drew the walking doll about, and held the big dolls, and put the dissected maps together. Then we played games. But the funniest part of it was when we all put on our paper caps and bonnets at supper, and looked like the story pictures. Each one laughed at all the rest, but did not know how funny she looked herself.

When I wrote to you before, I told you I did not care much for story boys, but I do think the Jimmy Brown letters are just splendid. I think we all like them better than anything else in the paper.

So many children have interesting collections, I must tell you about my collection of bisque dogs. There are over fifty, all different, from one to four inches tall. They are arranged on top of a low book-case, and attract a good deal of attention. Papa's cousin Edward said they were quite as interesting as mamma's cabinet.

I study geography and arithmetic now, and Swinton's *Word Book* and a *Supplementary Third Reader*. They are all interesting. I don't know which I like best. I have not missed yet in spelling, and I have worn the medal two weeks this month. I was 97 this week, but another girl in our room was 97 too, and she has the medal now.

I think very much of my three bound volumes of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE; and the fourth volume, which will go to be bound as soon as the next number comes, is as full of good things as the others are. I like the last pages, and all the animal stories especially, and the pictures.

NELLIE B.

I am glad your favorite Cozy was found so soon, but the wonder is that she did not set out to look for her home without waiting for her little mistress to come in search of her.

SHIRMAN, MOUNT LEBANON.

This summer a little friend has lent me HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, and I like it very much. I would like to take it. Perhaps you don't know where Shirman is? It is on Mount Lebanon, above Beirut. I am an American boy, but I was born in Syria. If I could write well, mamma says I could tell the boys and girls in America much that would be new to them. I have a beautiful Arabian steed, and a cat with two kittens, for my pets. The horse is papa's, but I ride it a great deal. We have no carriage-roads just around here. The carriage-road from Beirut is a half-hour from here. Everything is brought to our house on the backs of horses, donkeys, or mules, and our mountain mule-paths are steep and rocky. Our wood is brought on mules. Almost everything here is paid for by weight. The man who sells the wood is paid by weight, and the muleteer who brings it, and the man who saws and splits it; so it is weighed three times. Milk,

vegetables, and fruit are sold by weight. We have long, warm summers, but it is not very hot up here. The Franks from the cities of the plain come to the mountains for three hot months. There is no rain for six months. The winters are cold and rainy. We sometimes have a little snow. Roses and heliotropes bloom all winter. The high mountains are covered with snow.

I have never been to school. I study at home. I have lessons in French, music, Arabic, arithmetic, drawing, geography, and spelling. I think when I go to America I shall find myself less advanced than other boys of my age, but mamma says I have opportunities of learning some things which American boys do not. I have quite a nice little cabinet. We find a good many fossils on the mountains. I have stones from Tyre and from Egypt and Athens. I shall be ten years old on my next birthday. THEODORE H. P.

Judging by your letter, Theodore, you are the equal of most American lads of your age in all that makes a boy well educated.

My brother is writing to you, and I want to write too. He will tell you of our pets; I will tell you of the baby. She is not two years old; she is fat and merry, with long curly hair and brown eyes. She talks Arabic and English, and likes a joke. One day mamma said, "Where is Leila?" (the nurse). Elsie said, "Tukhmeen he nainey" ("It is supposed that she sleeps"); then she laughed. One day grandma told Elsie that she was going to Deir el Komr, a town five hours from here. Elsie opened her eyes big, and said, "Grandma going to the moon?" (Komr is Arabic for moon.) I have a nice play-house and dolls and playthings that I can't let Elsie see very often. She has her own, and hers are all broken; she sings to them "Old chairs to mend."

Our house looks down upon the sea—can you guess what sea? I can see the ship that takes this letter; if I don't see my letter again, I shall think the ship went to the bottom of the sea. I have all the studies that my brother has, but I am not so far on as he is. I am seven years old.

Very truly, EDITH M. P.

What a perfect darling of a baby! You see, dear, the ship brought your little missive safely.

BELOIT, KANSAS.

Mamma, sister Grace, and I spent last summer in Portland and Bangor, Maine. I had a splendid time. Many things were strange to me, for I have always lived on a prairie. We saw the ocean, and sailed on it. We saw Mount Washington, and crossed the St. Lawrence River on the Victoria Bridge. Then we also saw Lake Michigan, Lake Ontario, and Lake Huron, and the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

I have taken YOUNG PEOPLE for two years, and like it very much, especially the stories of Jimmy Brown and Lucy C. Lillie. I have three pet cats; their names are Daisy, Pansy, and Buttercup. I have several dolls. I am twelve, and have a sister three years older than I. I was not absent or tardy once during my last term at school. This has been a very rainy month so far; we don't often have long rain-storms.

JOSIE M. P.

Your name is on my roll of honor, dear. I do not like tardy people; but those who are prompt and punctual, and who can be depended upon, are always my delight.

KINNICKICK, KENTUCKY.

I live ten miles back of a small town on the Ohio River called Vanceburg. Kinnickick is named from a large creek which flows through it, and empties into the Ohio River. When the water is high, large rafts of timber are run out to the Ohio River, where they are sold. A great many nuts grow here, such as walnut, butternut, chestnut, hickory, and hazel nuts. How I wish you could see the leaves this fall! there are so many lovely colors. I am twelve years old, but I do not go to school, as my papa teaches me at home. I have six dolls and three kittens; their names are Dotty, Blossom, and Dimple, and a dog named Jumbo, because he is so large. I am going to try the receipt for chocolate caramels in YOUNG PEOPLE No. 207, as soon as the weather gets cold enough to harden them. ANNIE J. S.

MILFORD, DELAWARE.

We are three—Clinty, Allie, and Gracie—who live away down here in little Delaware. Papa is a fruit-farmer, living a half-mile out of town. We have any quantity of peaches, pears, grapes, apples, blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries in their season. Papa sends them to New York, and maybe you have had a taste of ours many times. If you will come down next summer we will treat you bountifully. We help in gathering the fruit, and earn the money to pay for YOUNG PEOPLE; we've taken it one year, and last week sent the money for it another. Two years ago our house was burned, and all our nice books and playthings were burned up. We miss them so much! All our clothes were burned too; but we are getting over the loss some now; still, we shall always regret it. Papa built another house, not as large and good, but comfortable. We have three cats, named Charcoal, Nellie, and

Buck; they are three generations—grandma, mother, and son. We have lots of chickens. We have a garden of our own in summer. Brother and I go to Milford to the public school; Gracie is five, and stays at home with mamma. I am ten, and Allie is seven. "Raising the 'Pearl'" and "Dick and D." are the best of all the stories. We all send love.

CLINTY K. W., ALLIE D. W., and GRACIE W.

Well, I am sorry you lost your home and so many treasures by fire, but glad you still have so much to make you a happy little trio.

GLENDALE, OHIO.

I have gathered a great many walnuts and hickory-nuts this year, and the blue jays carried them nearly all off. I wonder how they cracked them, and if they found them good. The way we know it was the blue jays is that mamma was looking out of the window one day and saw them at work. I think they ought to have gone to the woods and gathered them for themselves. I like to go to school, and love my teacher very much, she is so kind to me. Your little friend,

RICHARD DISNEY M.

What tricksy sprites those mischievous blue jays are!

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

I wrote you a letter about a year ago, but it was not printed, so I thought I would try again. I am a little girl eight years old. I thought this would be a nice day to write. It is the first rainy day we have had. I have a pet dog, and my sister May has a pet canary-bird, and my sister Abbie had a pet kitty, but it ran away in the night. I go to school, and like my teacher very much. I would like to write more, but I am afraid if I write a longer letter it will not be printed, and I want my little cousins in New Jersey to see it. I will end by sending my love to you and all the little readers of the Post-Office Box. IDA P. S.

The next is from dear little May, Ida's sister:

I have wanted to write to you a long time. I am seven years old. I have five dolls: Lillie, Bessie, Dottie, Mollie, and Belle. I have had Lillie since I was three years old.

MAY S.

Have you had the Nautilus yet? Lillie ought to be dressed in that pretty sailor suit, I think.

STENA, DAKOTA TERRITORY.

I thought you would like to hear from a little boy in Dakota. I am nine years old. Some folks tell about their pets. I have just one, and that is a little sister, and her name is Lilian; she is four years old. We used to live in a place called Sayre, in Pennsylvania, and this spring came to Dakota. We live on a farm of 160 acres. When we lived in Sayre I had to cross thirteen railroad tracks four times a day when I went to school, and I have not seen a car since I got here. My uncle sends me HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, and I like it. "Raising the 'Pearl,'" "Dick and D.," and Jimmy Brown's stories I like very much, and think I will like the story of "The Lost City" by the way it commences. There are lots of gophers out here where we live, and when we go near them they will stand up on their hind-legs and look at us.

J. ALLEN H.

PHILADELPHIA, NEW YORK.

I am a little girl eleven years old. I have not walked in six years, but I have a wheel-chair that I can go all around in. I do not go to school, but study at home, and recite to mamma. We live twenty-three miles from the St. Lawrence River. Papa, mamma, and I went down there this summer, and spent a few days. My aumty has a cottage near the river. I had a very nice time indeed.

I have one brother; he is sixteen years old today, and one adopted sister. She is married, and has a little girl thirteen months old; her name is Emma, and she is the sweetest baby that ever was. She lives two miles from us in the village.

I have taken YOUNG PEOPLE three years, and I think there was never so nice a paper in the world. I got one new subscriber for it this fall.

I have to write with my left hand, for I can not use my right one very well, so my mamma will copy it for me.

GRACE M. D.

I am very glad, dear Grace, that you can go about in your easy-chair on wheels, and your letter makes me believe that you are a sweet, brave, and patient girl.

SALONICA, TURKEY IN EUROPE.

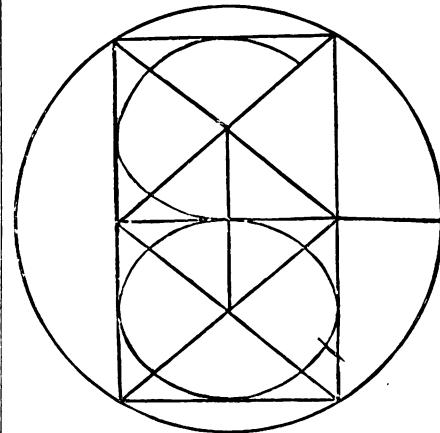
I have a beautiful cat called Beauty. She likes much to be swung, and that very high, and she never attempts to jump down. We rarely have snow, but often rain in winter. In summer we are three or four months without having a drop of rain. Then we have to buy water. I went once to the Greek church where St. Paul preached when he was here. Many brigands are here, and the English fleet came in our port in order to frighten them, and show them that the people can easily help whenever there is need of it. The brigands are very bold; they walk about in the city disguised as gentlemen, and they go

in the coffee-houses, where they take a cup of coffee and a nargileh—a sort of bottle with water and a long pipe and tobacco on the top of it; while smoking, the water makes bubbles and a gurgling noise. After having finished their talk, they walk away. Certainly this is a sort of spying. Many persons were captured here, of which the principal ones are Captain Sing, Mr. Suter, and a Pascha seventy years old. They took him when he was out one day superintending his property. They charge a great ransom, and if it is not sent at the time fixed, they send the person killed, or a part of his body, to his family.

HARRIET.

How thankful our American children should be that they live where they are in no danger from these fierce brigands. How glad you must have been when the English flag was flying in the harbor!

Exchangers will please make their notices as brief as they can. Fire-arms and dangerous playthings are prohibited as articles of exchange. Birds' eggs are never admitted. We would like you to state in the first place what you have, and follow it by a statement of what you want. Give the titles of all books, also the names of their authors. Do not ask for "offers," but specify the articles you wish to obtain.



Some weeks ago we offered our little readers as a puzzle, to see with how few lines all the letters of the alphabet may be represented within a circle. The above is the way our artist has done it. How many of you have used the same lines? If any have been able to represent all the letters with a less number of lines, we should be glad to see the drawing.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

NO. 1.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Primals spell the name of a gallant knight of the days of Queen Elizabeth. Finals that of his native land.

1. Distance. 2. Return. 3. Desire. 4. Fish. 5. Country in the eastern hemisphere. 6. Profit. 7. Part of the body.

W. H. COLBURN.

NO. 2.

DIAMOND.

1. A letter. 2. A plant. 3. Plagues. 4. To lay waste. 5. One position of an anchor. 6. To sleep. 7. A letter.

CLIFTON SUTTON.

NO. 3.

ENIGMA.

My first is in burro, but not in mule. My second is in board, but not in rule. My third is in clover, but not in grass. My fourth is in looking, but not in glass. My whole in a school-room off you see, And dunces only are foes of me.

CLARENCE F. RITCHIE.

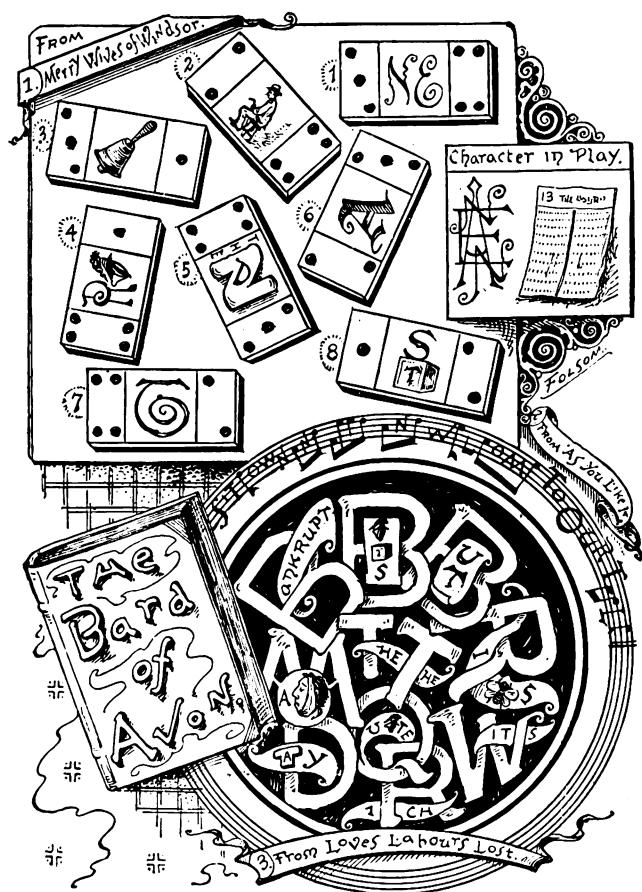
ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN No. 210.

No. 1.—La Salle, Bryant.

No. 2.—Victoria, Melville, Helena, Nancy, Cayenne, Leghorn, Wrath, Yellowstone, Cologne.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from Robert L. Allée, Dei Baldwin, Emily Amory, P. P. J., Clifton Sutton, R. I. Chard, A. Pipes, Jack Frost, Lulu Pease, Grace W. II., Harry Jones, Dick and Dolly Fletcher, Amy J., Maggie Thompson.

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THREE PUZZLES FOR THANKSGIVING.

No. 1. Match the dominoes end to end, and read the rebus, paying no attention to the spots. The answer is a line from one of Shakspeare's plays. In the small inclosure on the right will be found the name of the character who speaks the line.

No. 2. The musical rebus gives a line from another of Shakspeare's plays.

No. 3. The eleven large initials have attachments in which may be found symbols or letters for forming a word. Arrange these words in proper order, and find a quotation from a third play of the great "Bard of Avon."

PUMPKIN-PIE.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

THROUGH sun and through shower the pumpkin grew,
When the days were long and the skies were blue.

And it felt quite vain when its giant size
Was such that it carried away the prize

At the county fair, when the people came,
And it wore a ticket and bore a name.

Alas for the pumpkin's pride! one day
A boy and his mother took it away.

It was pared and sliced, and pounded and stewed,
And the way it was treated was harsh and rude.

It was sprinkled with sugar, and seasoned with spice,
The boy and his mother pronounced it nice.

It was served in a paste, it was baked and browned,
And at last on a pantry shelf was found.

And on Thursday John and Mary and Mabel
Will see it on aunty's laden table.

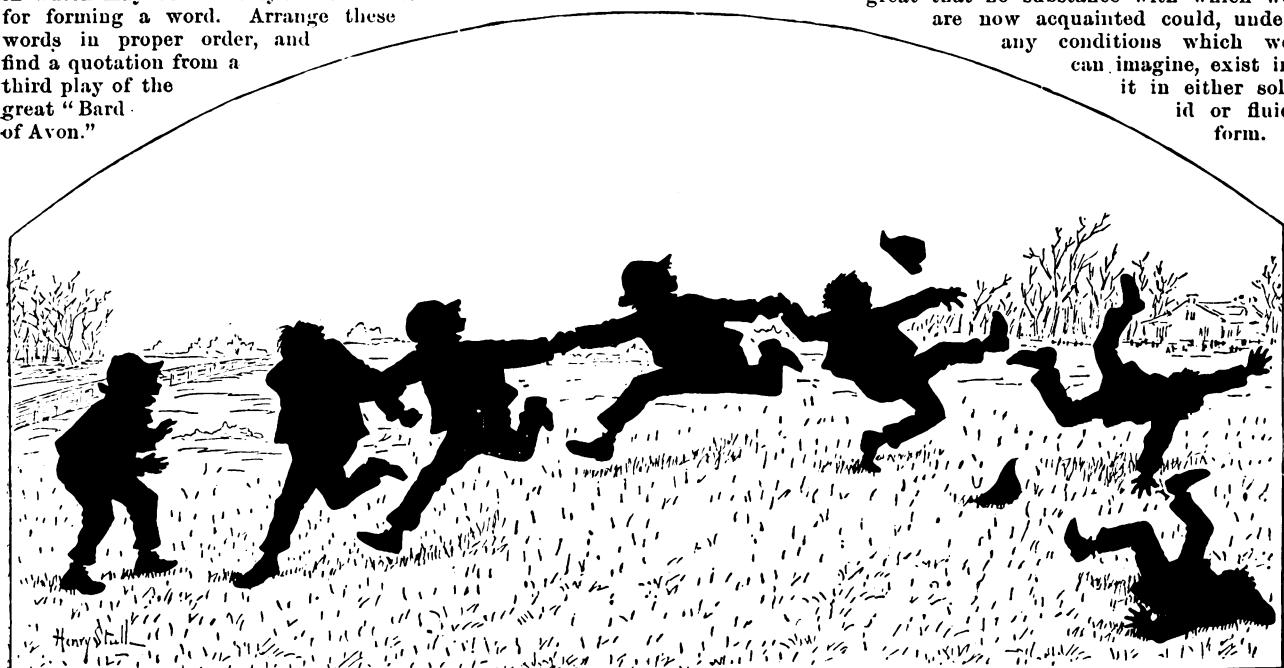
For the pumpkin grew 'neath a summer sky,
Just to turn at Thanksgiving into a pie.

THE INTERIOR OF THE EARTH.

THAT the interior of the earth is the seat of great heat is a familiar truth. Volcanic eruptions show the fact. Mining experiences, moreover, have furnished us with the rate at which the heat increases, which is generally computed to be about one degree Fahrenheit for every fifty-five feet of descent. But mining experiences are necessarily very limited. The deepest mine in England, that of the Rosebridge Colliery, near Wigan, takes us down only 2442 feet, and to a temperature not much exceeding ninety degrees Fahrenheit. It is hot enough to make the work exceedingly trying to the miners, but that is all.

But, if we may assume a uniform heat in descending, the temperature at a depth of fifty miles may be expressed in figures at 4800 degrees Fahrenheit. In other words, at less than an eighth of the distance which lies between the surface of the earth and its centre the heat would be about twenty-two times the heat of boiling water at the sea-level. Figures might, of course, express the heat at greater depths still, but figures fail to convey any idea to the mind of that which must necessarily exceed all imagination. Suffice it to say that in descending we must soon come to a heat so

great that no substance with which we are now acquainted could, under any conditions which we can imagine, exist in either solid or fluid form.



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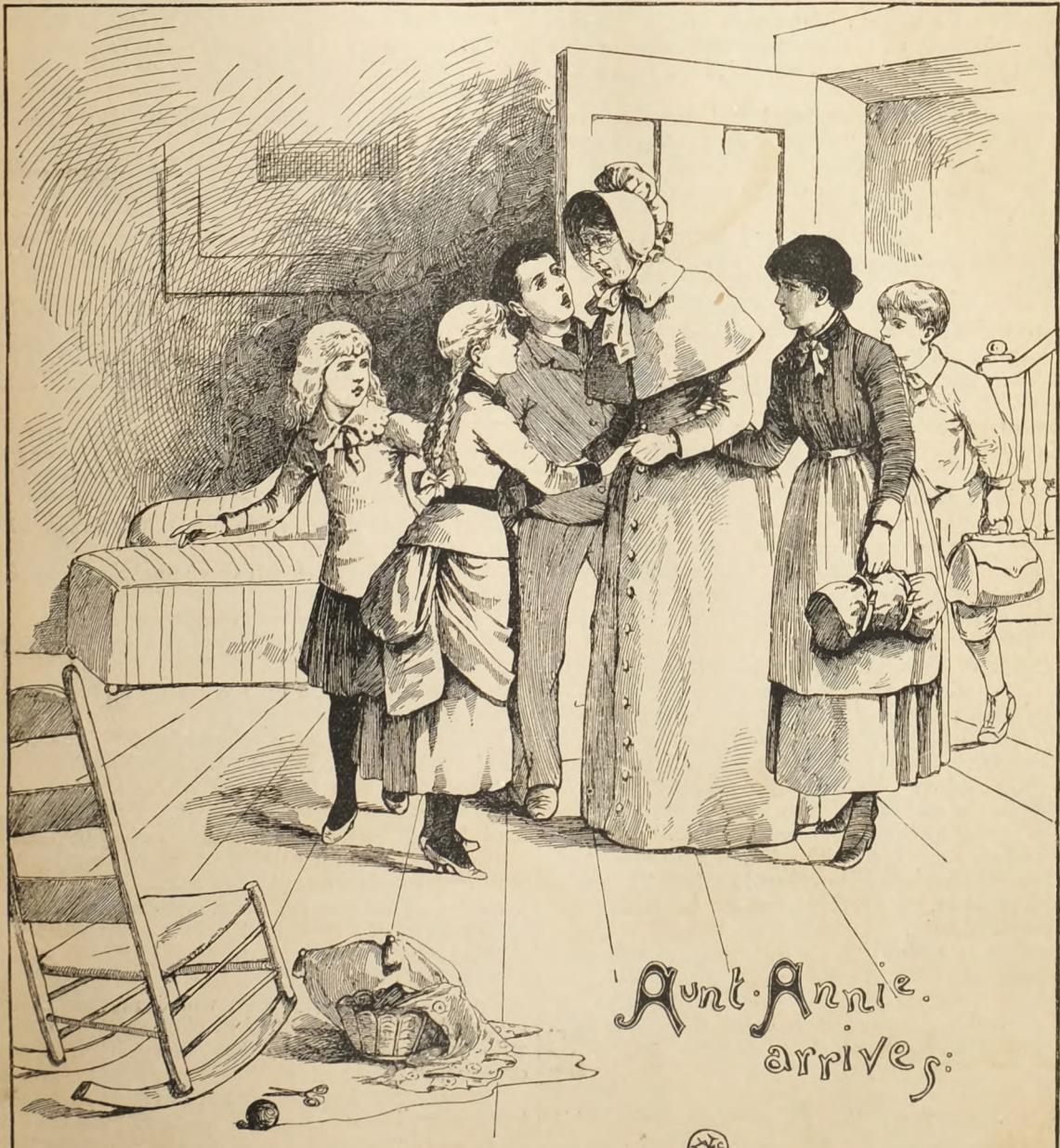
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OUR CHRISTMAS TREE: HOW IT GREW.

BY SIDNEY DAYRE.

I.

"**G**OING—going—gone! Good-by! Good-by! Fling an old shoe after them, Polly. Hurrah! Hurrah!"

"Be sure you take a good rest, children," mother called back to us.

We watched the omnibus out of sight with great glee, but we could not help a sort of forsaken feeling as we went into the quiet rooms. However, the sadness only lasted a few minutes, and as Phil came back from seeing mother off, and told how her dear gentle face had seemed to brighten with every breath of fresh air and every new sight and sound, after her long confinement to the house, and how the twins were fairly running over with laugh and chatter, we grew wild again, and sang and shouted until old Bridget put in her head with:

"An' is it crazy intirely ye're all gone?"

It was so delightful to feel free once more, to make a noise in the old house, where for the last three months the quiet which comes with sickness had brooded. Scarlet fever had come among us, bringing, we had feared more than once, the shadow of the dark angel's wings in its train. And now, at last, all were well, and mother had gone to her old home for a rest, with the twins, who needed a change.

"Three weeks to Christmas," said Phil, as we gathered about the grate after tea. "What are we going to do?"

"You know we all agreed, when mother said we couldn't have a thing this year except good wishes and a good dinner," said Agnes.

"I know we did," said Ruth; "but I do think, after the forlorn times we've had, we ought to have some kind of a jollification."

"It takes money to get up jollifications."

"Not much. Let's have a Christmas tree?"

"Oh, let's!" cried Polly.

"You little geese! Don't you know we haven't a single cent?"

"I don't care," said Ruth; "we can make lots of nice things ourselves, and just think what a surprise it would be for mother and the little girls."

"We couldn't even buy a box of wax tapers."

"We'll use tallow candles, then."

"Nonsense! All drippy and greasy; and who wants a tree without that beautiful soft light that wax tapers give?"

"Perhaps they'd come along somehow," said Polly, hopefully. "Let's try it, anyhow; let's begin something, even if it don't grow into a tree."

"Yes," chimed in Ruth, "we've been talking about a tree for years, and we've always been too busy to have it. Now we're all out of school, and three weeks before us."

"Well, I'm in favor of doing something," said Jack; "but if we set our stakes for a tree, let it be a tree, I say! 'Ain high,' as the copy-book directs."

"Let us be up and doing, then," said Ruth, jumping up. "I'm going to begin this very minute." She ran upstairs, and soon returned with a bag of worsteds.

"That everlasting sofa pillow!" said Polly. "If you're going to fill that in, we'd better have our Christmas tree on the Fourth of July."

"I'm going to cut out the filled-in part, and make it into a pincushion for mother's room. That shabby old thing there is a perfect disgrace. I can fill in these corners in an hour. I'm going to finish the edges with worsted cords, with tassels on the corners."

II.

The five of us, Polly, Ruth, Jack, Agnes, and Phil, ranged up from eleven to sixteen. I am not going to say which of them I was, for I then should be in modesty bound to represent one of us as a very tame and uninter-

esting person, and we don't wish to have it supposed that there is any such creature among us.

Much of the next day was spent in rummaging amid brains and bags and boxes, and in forming and discussing plans. Many delightful things were thought of, which could be made for mother or the twins, and these were openly talked of, while the gifts to be interchanged among ourselves had to be managed more privately.

Toward night Jack came into the house in high feather. "I've struck the very thing!" he exclaimed. "Jim Brand's going to lend me his scroll-saw in exchange for my club skates. I sha'n't want them, for I'm going to saw like fury."

There was a great clapping of hands, for we all knew that no end of pretty things could be made with a scroll-saw. He had further traded some old school-books for wood to use, and he began work with energy.

For three days Jack's saw kept up one continuous roar, seeming to run races with Agnes's tucking on the machine. Then he had turned out a pair of brackets which each girl secretly wished might be intended for herself. But after listening to our admiration he coolly carried them out of the house, coming back in an hour.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, "I've got a splendid thing now!"

"What, Jack? Is it a secret? Do tell us."

"I've traded away my brackets—"

"Oh! those beauties?"

"—For two magnificent—life-like—portraits—of—the Father of his Country."

"George Washington?" asked Ruth.

"George Washington!" exclaimed Agnes, without raising her eyes.

"Well, now, I thought you'd all be pleased," said Jack, in a disappointed tone, as he started toward the barn to feed the cows.

"So much for boys!" said Ruth, with a most disgusted air. "To think of those lovely brackets going for two of those poky old portraits that everybody's sick of already!"

"Ruth, I'm ashamed of you," said Phil, solemnly. "Where is your patriotism?"

"I don't care," said Ruth. "Wherever you go you're sure to see the Father of his Country. He's hung in half the houses, and he's in half the school-books and on all the green stamps, and lots of other things."

An hour later Jack came into the house, and held up two one-dollar bills.

"There! Don't you call those finely executed engravings of Washington?"

"Jack! is that what you meant, you tease?"

"Now ain't you sorry for your disrespect to that good old gentleman, Ruth?"

"Oh, it's not that I love Washington less, but money more, you see."

"This is the first of a general fund for the tree," said Jack. "We are no longer a penniless set."

"Jack, you're a jewel; and you're right, Jack. One can't have too many *such* pictures. I wish I had a hundred!" And Jack was sent at once to buy the wax tapers.

"But I'm getting so sick of home-made stuff!" said Ruth. "I wish we could buy *some* things; and, Agnes, I know how we can get some more money. I have the smartest sort of a thought."

"Let it out carefully, Ruth."

"Let's sell the butter."

Two little Alderney cows which mother thought as much of, we told her, as of us children, kept us supplied with butter. In summer there was enough to sell some every week.

"But mother don't like to have us stint ourselves at the table. She doesn't think it is healthy."

"Humph! I don't think there's much stinting when we've plenty of milk and everything else. Come, let's do it. Just think how it will add to Jack's fund."

After some discussion it was agreed, and Jack carried the next churning to town, bringing back in exchange therefor two more life-like portraits of Washington. We began to indulge in dreams of magnificence.

Two dolls' heads were bought, and for the next two or three days baby-land reigned, for all hands joined in loving co-operation in preparing a treat for the darling twins.

All went well, and we worked on without any interruption until one morning, when Agnes went into town for a careful selection of tempting wools, which were to be knit into wristlets for the boys, and brought home two letters. Oh, those letters!

"Here's one for you, Jack, from Bob; and this one's for mother. Who can it be from? 'Your affectionate sister, Annie Marston.'"

Mother had said all letters were to be read, and Agnes read the few lines to herself, her face gathering a very blank look as she did so.

"What is it? Don't keep us all waiting."

"Going to spend the holidays with thee and thy dear children. Be with thee on the 19th." To-morrow's the 19th, and there's no time to tell her mother's away."

"Listen to what Bob says," cried Jack, opening his letter. Bob was a cousin who had been sent to a school not far from us, and had met Jack:

"The folks say you are to have a visitation from Aunt Annie. Don't I congratulate you, though! I haven't seen her for a long time; but she came to our house once, and didn't we young fry have a glory time of it! She's as deaf as a post, and always gets mad if anybody don't talk loud enough, or if they let on they think she's deaf. And she can't bear young people."

We gazed into each other's faces in dismay.

"What shall we do?"

"I know just how she looks," said Jack, with a groan. "She's got one of those doleful faces, all drawn down, that make you think she's thinking, 'You're all poor miserable sinners.'"

"Tall and lanky and skinny," put in Ruth, "with a very scanty skirt to her dress."

"Children," said Agnes, with dignity, "I'm ashamed of you all. I think Bob's a very disrespectful, ill-behaved boy, and he has no business to write such stuff about his relatives, especially when they're so much older than himself. If she's deaf, she's very much to be pitied, poor thing! and I'm sure I don't wonder she don't like young people, if she's been used to such as Bob."

"Hear! hear!" cried Jack. "Agnes, you'll do for a preacher."

"And as she is coming," went on Agnes, "we must be kind to her and make her as comfortable as possible."

Dear, sweet Agnes! Two months ago she had lain so near the dark river that after she came back to us who loved her we could not quite get over the idea that her soft eyes must have caught a glimpse of the beautiful shore. Her words carried weight with them, and as Phil got up and kissed her, we all firmly resolved that Aunt Annie should never have reason to guess, through word or look of ours, that her coming was considered a most fearful, terrible, chilling, freezing, paralyzing damper upon our Christmas festivities.

III.

"Come in, Aunt Annie; we've been watching for you," shouted Agnes.

"You must be very tired," screamed Polly.

"And very cold," shrieked Ruth.

"Thank thee, dears. How's thee do?—how's thee do?" said Aunt Annie, in a cordial voice. "Yes, of course I'm sorry not to find thy mother at home" (Phil had told her about it as he brought her from the depot), "but," with an affectionate glance, "I'm sure there's enough of thee left. And what big girls and boys thee's grown!"

She chatted pleasantly with us at tea, but asked as we were leaving the table:

"Thee don't think I'm deaf, do thee, dears?"

"Oh, Aunt Annie," said Agnes, coloring, but not lowering her tones, "do we talk so loud?"

"We are rather a noisy set, I believe," said Phil, at the top of his voice.

"So mother always says," helped out Ruth, in accents which might have aroused the seven sleepers.

We had arranged mother's room very nicely for Aunt Annie, and she seemed willing to retire to it very early, acknowledging that she did feel tired.

"I think her face is just as pleasant as it can be," said Jack.

"It isn't a bit drawn down and sour, and she isn't skinny."

"Nor her skirts scanty."

"What a pity she's so dreadfully deaf!"

"And that she don't know it. Do let's be careful so she won't get angry with us. I wish she'd get to like us."

We were so careful that we all felt hoarse by the time breakfast was over the next morning. We then showed Aunt Annie most of our Christmas doings, though we kept back some of the brightest articles, and if she thought such things sinful, she was too polite to say so.

"I wonder if she thinks all we're doing is vanity?" remarked Ruth. "I've heard say that some of the Quakers think it's wicked to keep particular days at all—Christmas and such—that it's just a kind of paganism."

"Oh, I suppose she thinks we're a pack of heathen," sighed Agnes.

But on the day when Agnes had to leave sewing-machine and patterns and scraps of silk and dabs of gum to go to the kitchen and make a great fruit cake, Aunt Annie went too, and gave very willing and valuable help. She frosted it so beautifully that we all exclaimed when Agnes brought some colored sugars to ornament the top.

"It will spoil it," we urged.

"I know it, but the twins will not be satisfied without mother's initials, and plenty of ornamentation besides."

For mother's birthday was the day after Christmas, and a cake was always made in honor of it. So an astonishing wreath of roses soon surrounded an elaborate "G. C.," and the cake was placed on the sideboard, the admired of all beholders.

Just about the time that frosting was fairly dry, we heard a sound of jingling bells, and Sue Harley put in her pretty face, glowing with the frosty air.

"I've only a minute to tell you—wanted to let you know yesterday, but had to see so many—there's a surprise sociable down at Mrs. Graham's to-night, and of course you'll all go. Good-by."

Agnes looked thoughtful, then grave, then despairing.

"There 't is," she said, in a tone which would have been peevish if it had been anybody but Agnes. "Some of us have got to go, and whether we do or not, something's got to be sent. It must be folks who haven't anything else to do who fly around and get up things in such a hurry. There's no time to make anything, and nothing in the house to make it with if there was."

"We can't send anything at all."

"We must, Ruth; we must send that cake."

We were all horrified.

"It's too bad, I know," admitted Agnes; "but the Grants wouldn't understand it if we staid out of it, so it's the only thing to do."

That's how that cake came to get into our Christmas story. We could have wept as Jack carried it away in a big basket.

"Probably be left over and sold at auction for half what it's worth, and we with not a cent to buy it," growled Ruth.

It was put up at auction. A basket of doughnuts and



FINISHING "MOTHER'S PINCUSHION."

a cold turkey were sold first by a fun-loving church member, who seemed quite impressed as the gorgeous thing of combined sweets was placed before him. The energy he brought to bear on its sale was simply bewildering.

"Well, now, ladies and gentlemen, what am I offered for this most splendid cake? Dollar 'n' a half—'n' 'alf, 'n' 'alf, 'n' 'alf. Make it seventy-five? Thank you, ma'am. Two? I'm offered two dollars for this incomparable cake. Half I'm offered? Three 'n' 'alf, 'n' 'alf, 'n' 'alf. May I have the four? Ladies, have you pondered well the spices in this cake? You have heard of spicy breezes—those breezes owe their fragrance, as they blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle, to the very varieties of spice found in this cake. Doesn't the thought of it waft you in spirit to flowery meads and meandering rivulets? Four?—Four dollars, f'r dol'rs, f'r dol'rs, f'r dol'rs. Gimme the half? Four dollars *and a half*. Will you gimme the five? Five dollars. Thank you, ma'am—cheap for the flowers alone. Fi'd'l'rs, fi'd'l'rs, fi'd'l'rs, fi'd'l'rs—don't forget that this is the last chance for securing such a prize. Five and a half I'm offered—five—and—a—half—going!—GOING! Five dollars 'n' a half—going!—going!—GONE!"

Agnes's face beamed all over as she looked at Ruth, and both felt so well satisfied with the good price which the cake had brought that they went back in good spirits to finish the play in which the young people had been engaged.

But when at last, tired and sleepy and cold, we reached home, the first thing which met our astonished eyes, standing on the sideboard, just where it had stood in the afternoon, was that cake!

No one could give any account of it. Bridget was cross, and in answer to all our inquiries only grumbled at sitting up so late for us. And when we expressed our surprise to Aunt Annie, she seemed deafer than ever.

It was a mystery.

IV.

"At last! at last! Christmas-eve! How have we lived so long without mother and the little ones!"

"The Campbells are coming—hurrah! hurrah!" shouts Jack. The omnibus loomed through the snow-laden air, and he and Phil tore in, each with a twin on his shoulder, while the girls rushed to the gate for mother, and then vigorously swept snow before her all the way in.

"Merry Christmas! merry Christmas!" "Glad you are

come!" "Glad to be home, my darlings." "Glad you are looking so well." "Glad!" "Glad." "Glad!"

"Glad to see thee, Gertrude dear. Hope thee's all well." Aunt Annie's voice scarcely penetrated through the joyous clamor as her gentle face appeared among us.

"Less noise, children," said mother. "Bless me, dears, what a fuss you do make! How do you suppose your aunt can stand such screaming?"

We wrinkled our foreheads and shook our heads at her, but she did not seem to understand.

"And why is the parlor shut up?" For mother always believed in keeping the pleasantest rooms open and used.

"Oh, only a little surprise for the twins this evening," whispered some one.

A most enjoyable excursion through the snow to an ever-green-clad hill had been taken by the entire force to secure a tree, and it now stood awaiting its charmed blossoming.

All the afternoon Phil and Agnes were mysteriously busy behind closed doors. There was running to and fro and much carrying of things carefully covered. Long before night Patty and Madge, the twins, were so brimful and running over with curiosity that it was difficult to coax them into patient waiting until those doors were flung open, and Phil escorted Aunt Annie in, while mother followed, surrounded by the rest of us.

There it was, that tree of ours!—planted in faith, and watered by energetic work.

Not a thing had Phil and Agnes hung upon it which was not wholly or partly the work of our own hands. If all the loving thoughts and words and looks with which they had been made could have been sewed, or knit, or sawed, or painted, or pasted into them, and could have shone out in their own true light, I am sure they would have glowed with a radiance which would have dimmed the glory of the wax tapers.

"You dear children! How have you done all this, and in so little time?" said mother.

"Indeed, thee's all done well, dears." Aunt Annie's face beamed as brightly as any face among us, and we could not detect in it the slightest shade of protest against such worldliness.

And now new mysteries connected with that tree began to appear.

Half hidden between a tidy for mother and a framed picture for Ruth was found a tiny box containing a chain and locket for Polly. Home-made things, indeed!

Not far from it was a lace handkerchief for Agnes; then a breast-pin for Ruth. All unnecessary finery was a rare luxury in our family. The excitement grew intense when a pair of sleeve-buttons for Jack, a dainty set of doll's dishes and an astonishing picture-book for the twins, came to light, and arose to its highest pitch when nearly at the last Agnes spied a box addressed to Phil; it held a fine assortment of water-colors, with everything else needed by an amateur artist.

Then we made a rush for mother.

"Oh, mother, how good you are!"

"But how could you do so much?"

"And you shouldn't have spent so much money on us."

"I, dears? I haven't spent a cent."

We stared blankly into each other's faces.

"Then," said Polly, in a voice as of one driven against her will to a most unlikely conclusion, "it was—Aunt—Annie!"

"Sh-h? Polly, she'll hear you."

There was a funny little smile and a pretty color on Aunt Annie's face as we looked more sharply at her where she sat examining one of Phil's drawings.

"Oh, Aunt Annie, did you give me this?" screamed Ruth, rushing to her side.

"And me this?"

"And this?"

"And this?"

Google

As we crowded about her with a noise which might well have driven one crazy, she put her hands to her ears with a look of comical appeal.

"Children," cried mother, severely, "I am astonished beyond measure at the noise you make. What will Aunt Annie think of such rudeness?"

"Mamma, she's deaf!" said Polly, in a low voice.

"Who's deaf?"

"Why, Aunt Annie."

"How ridiculous!" said mother.

"Then thee *did* think I was deaf?" asked Aunt Annie.

Through that busy day we had all failed to notice that mother had talked with her in her natural voice.

"Then you're *not* deaf?" asked Jack, with such an amazed tone that she laughed until we all laughed with her.

"Oh, how we've shouted and shrieked at you!" said Agnes. "How did you ever bear it?"

"Why did thee think I was deaf?" she asked.

"'Twas that everlasting Bob," said Jack.

He ran to get Bob's letter, and, in spite of Agnes's efforts to stop him, read it aloud.

"I see how the mistake occurred," said mother. "There is another Aunt Annie, the widow of your father's half-brother, who is very deaf, poor thing."

"And this is what thee thought of me when I came to thee, is it?" said Aunt Annie, looking over the letter with an amused face. "Thee dear ones! Gertrude, they have behaved like angels to me, all the time believing I hated young people!"

Not deaf! We could scarcely understand it. As we thought over the past week we blessed Agnes from our very hearts that she had inspired us not only to behave kindly, but to feel kindly, toward Aunt Annie. How thankful we were to be able to remember that not one word had been spoken which could wound the keenest ears!

With one impulse we crowded about her, and hugged the dear soul until she was almost smothered. Then we joined hands, drew her into the circle, and danced around

her. It was a way we had when we felt more than usually uproarious. There were so many of us, you see!

Ruth stopped us suddenly, and looked at Aunt Annie.

"Aunt Annie, now answer. Was it you that had that fruit cake brought back for us, or was it not?"

"Well, dear, if thee will make me tell, I suppose it was."

That's all about our Christmas tree. We were all glad we had undertaken it. As we got quieted down, and mother called us around her at the piano, and sang "Glory to God in the highest," I am sure our hearts were fuller of love to Him and to each other that we had tried to make this blessed Christmas a time long to be remembered.

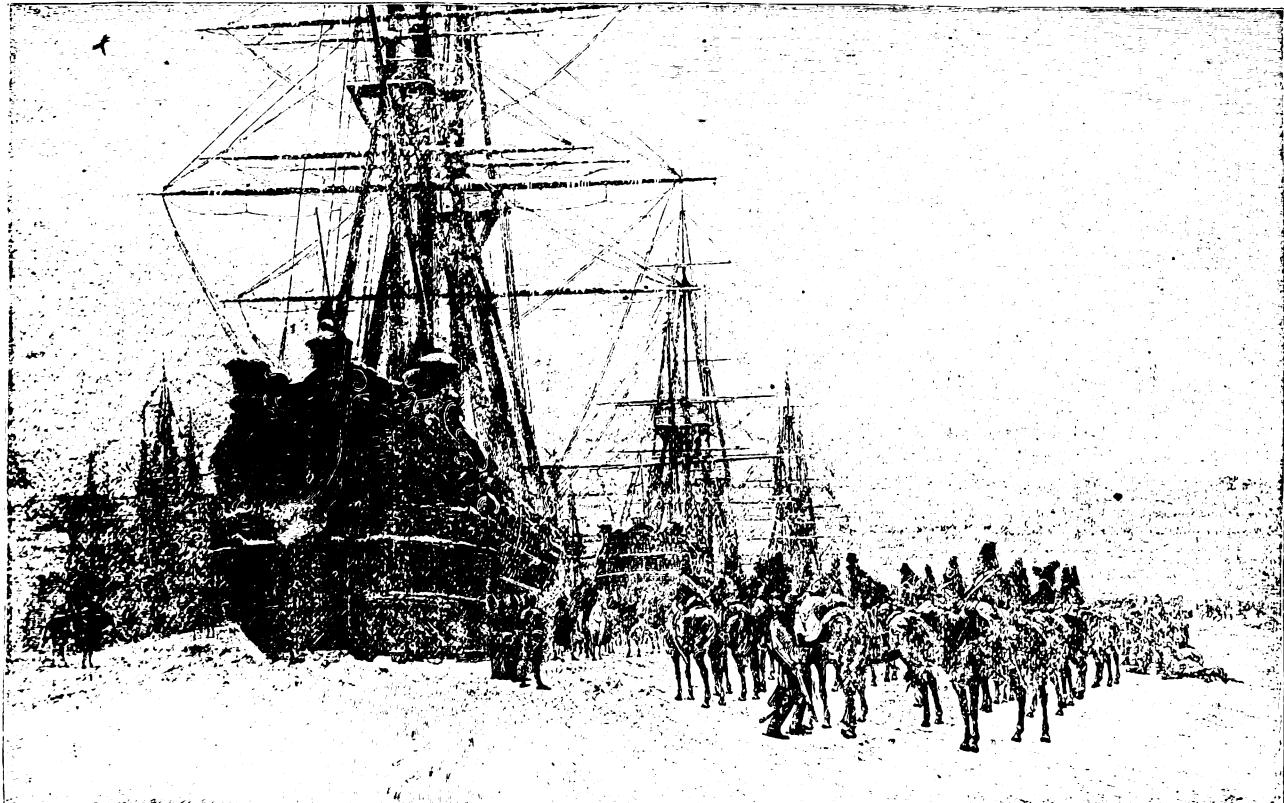
THE STORY OF A WINTER CAMPAIGN.

BY GEORGE CARY EGGLESTON.

NEARLY all the countries in Europe were making war upon France in 1795. The French people had set up a republic, and all the kingdoms round about were trying to make them submit to a king again. This had been going on for several years, and sometimes it looked as though the French would be beaten, in spite of their brave struggles to keep their enemies back and manage their own affairs in their own way.

At one time everything went against the French. Their armies were worn out with fighting, their supply of guns had run short, they had no powder, and their money matters were in so bad a state that it seemed hardly possible for France to hold out any longer. In the mean time England, Austria, Spain, Holland, Piedmont, and Prussia, besides many of the small German states, had joined together to fight France, and their armies were on every side of her.

A country in such a state as that, with so many powerful enemies on every side, might well have given up; but the French are a brave people, and they were fight-



CAPTURE OF THE DUTCH FLEET BY THE SOLDIERS OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

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ing for their liberties. Instead of giving up in despair, they set to work with all their might to carry on the war.

The first thing to be done was to raise new armies, and so they called for men, and the men came forward in great numbers from every part of the country. In a little while they had more men to make soldiers of than had ever before been brought together in France. But this was only a beginning. The men were not yet trained soldiers, and even if they had been, they had no guns and no powder; no clothing was to be had, and there was very little food for them to eat. Still the French did not despair.

Knowing that there would not be time enough to train the new men, they put some of their old soldiers in each regiment of new ones, so that the new men might learn from the veterans how to march and how to fight.

In the mean time they had set up armories, and were making guns as fast as they could. Their greatest trouble was about powder. They had chemists who knew how to make it, but they had no nitre to make it of, and did not know at first how to get any. At last one of their chemists said that there was some nitre—from a few ounces to a pound or two—in the earth of every cellar floor; and that if all the nitre in all the cellar floors of France could be collected, it would be enough to make plenty of powder.

But how to get this nitre was a question. The cellar floors must be dug up, the earth must be washed, and the water must be carefully passed through a course of chemical treatment in order to get the nitre, free from earth and from all other things with which it was mixed. It would take many days for a chemist to extract the nitre from the earth of a single cellar, and then he would get only a pound or two of it at most.

It did not seem likely that much could be done in this way, but all the people were anxious to help, and so the cry went up from every part of the country, "Send us chemists to teach us how, and we will do the work and get the nitre ourselves." This was quickly done. All the chemists were set at work teaching the people how to get a little nitre out of a great deal of earth, and then every family went to work. In a little while the nitre began to come in to the powder factories. Each family sent its little parcel of the precious salt as a free gift to the country. Some of them were so proud and glad of the chance to help that they dressed their little packages of nitre in ribbons of the national colors, and wrote patriotic words upon them. Each little parcel held only a few ounces, or at most a pound or two, of the white salt; but the parcels came in by tens of thousands, and in a few weeks there were hundreds of tons of nitre at the powder-mills.

As soon as there was powder enough the new armies began to press their enemies, and during the summer and fall of 1794 they steadily drove them back. When they met their foes in battle they nearly always forced them to give way. They charged upon forts and took them at the point of the bayonet; cities and towns everywhere fell into their hands, and by the time that winter set in they were so used to winning battles that nothing seemed too hard for them to undertake.

But the French soldiers were in a very bad condition to stand the cold of winter. One great army, under General Pichegrus, which had driven the English and Dutch far into the Netherlands, was really almost naked. The shoes of the soldiers were worn out, and so they had to wrap their feet in wisps of straw to keep them from freezing. Many of the men had not clothing enough to cover their nakedness, and for decency's sake had to plait straw into mats which they wore around their shoulders like blankets. They had no tents to sleep in, but, nearly naked as they were, had to lie down in the snow or on the hard frozen ground, and sleep as well as they could in the bitter winter weather.

There never was an army more in need of a good rest in winter-quarters, and as two great rivers lay in front of them, it seemed impossible to do anything more until spring. The English and Dutch were already safely housed for the winter, feeling perfectly sure that the French could not cross the rivers or march in any direction until the beginning of the next summer.

The French generals, therefore, put their men into the best quarters they could get for them, and the poor, half-naked, barefooted soldiers were glad to think that their work for that year was done.

Day by day the weather grew colder. The ground was frozen hard, and ice began running in the rivers. After a little while the floating ice became so thick that the rivers were choked with it. When Christmas came the stream nearest the French was frozen over, and three days later the ice was so hard that the surface of the river was as firm as the solid ground.

Then came an order from General Pichegrus to shoulder arms and march. In the bitterest weather of that terrible winter the barefooted, half-clad French soldiers left their huts, and marched against their foes. Crossing the first river on the ice, they fell upon the surprised Dutch, and utterly routed them. About the same time they made a dash at the strong fortified posts along the river, and captured them.

The French were now masters of the large island that lay between the two rivers, for they are really only two branches of one river, and the land between them is an island. But the ice in the farther stream was not yet hard enough to bear the weight of cannon, so Pichegrus had to stay where he was for a time. Both sides now watched the weather, the French hoping for still harder frosts, while their enemies prayed for a thaw.

The cold weather continued, and day by day the ice became firmer. On the 8th of January, 1795, Pichegrus began to cross, and on the 10th his whole army had passed the stream, while his enemies were rapidly retreating. He pushed forward into the country, sending his columns in different directions to press the enemy at every point. The barefooted, half-naked French soldiers were full of spirit, and in spite of frost and snow and rough frozen roads they marched steadily and rapidly. City after city fell before them, and on the 20th of January they marched into Amsterdam itself, and were complete conquerors.

Hungry and half-frozen as they were, it would not have been strange if these poor soldiers had rushed into the warm houses of the city and helped themselves to food and clothing. But they did nothing of the kind. They stacked their arms in the streets and public squares, and quietly waited in the snow, patiently bearing the bitter cold of the wind for several hours, while the magistrates were getting houses and food and clothing ready for them.

This whole campaign was wonderful, and on almost every day some strange thing happened; but perhaps the strangest of all the events in this winter war was that which is shown in the picture. Pichegrus, learning that there was a fleet of the enemy's vessels lying at anchor near the island of Texel, sent a column of cavalry, with some cannon, in that direction, to see if anything could be done. The cavalry found the Zuyder Zee hard frozen, and the ships firmly locked in the ice. So they put spurs to their horses, galloped over the frozen surface of the sea, marched up to the ships, and called on them to surrender. It was a new thing in war for ships to be charged by men on horseback, but there the horsemen were with strong ice under them, and the ships could not sail away from them. The sailors could make a fight, of course, but the cavalry, with their cannon, were too strong for them, and so they surrendered without a battle, and for the first time in history a body of hussars captured a squadron of ships at anchor.

THE LOST CITY;*
OR, THE BOY EXPLORERS IN CENTRAL ASIA.
BY DAVID KER.

CHAPTER VIII.
THE VALLEY OF DEATH.

ALL the time this game of life and death was going on. Mahmoud had never stirred from his watch-tower upon the wall; and just at that moment he sent forth the long shrill cry which was the well-known signal of danger, following it up by shouting:

"The Goorkhas, brothers! the Goorkhas!"

At the name of these mountaineers of Nepaul, the fiercest and most dreaded of all the Hindoo troops in the British service, everything else was forgotten in a moment. All was confusion, which was increased tenfold as the three scouts sent down the valley came galloping in, with full confirmation of Mahmoud's evil tidings. To attempt any defense of such a wide circuit of wall with their scanty force against disciplined soldiers was hopeless; and Selim, who alone of the whole band seemed to preserve his presence of mind, gave orders for the mounting of the women and children upon the strongest horses, and the instant abandonment of the stronghold.

Meanwhile our heroes began to hope that they might be overlooked in the general confusion; but they were promptly undeceived by hearing the Afghan who had already been so active against them remarking that "it was now time to kill the two unbelievers."

"Wilt thou be always a father of asses?" cried Selim, whose cunning brain had already planned how to use this new turn of events to his own advantage. "Know you not that if you shed their blood, the English will kill our people in like manner; whereas, if we keep them as hostages, we may hereafter give them in exchange for our brethren who are in captivity? Let the Feringhi [European] youths write that as the English deal with their prisoners, so will we deal with ours, and it shall be left at the gate for those who come to read."

This new view of the case quite took the Afghans by surprise, and all agreed that Selim's plan was excellent. Tom Hilton, whose hands were loosed for the purpose, wrote the required message with a piece of charcoal on a strip of white linen, which was then fastened in a conspicuous place just outside the gateway. But his American smartness prompted him to turn the Afghans' ignorance of English to account by adding a postscript for the benefit of any British officers who might be with the Goorkhas, telling the route by which they were to cross the mountains in their retreat—a measure which was to lead to consequences of which Tom never dreamed.

And now began a march such as our heroes had hitherto known only through books of travel. All around, the barren, gloomy ridges stood up black and blasted and hideous, crossing and recrossing each other in every direction like the threads of a spider's web, and seeming to form one horrid complicated trap for every living thing once entangled in it. Through this dismal maze they zigzagged as best they might, now along ledge paths barely three feet wide, now among fallen boulders as high as the roof of a cottage, now over heaps of crumbling earth, from which rose at every step clouds of hot, prickly dust that well-nigh choked them.

During the first day our two lads went on foot with the rest, the horses being reserved for the women, children, and older men. But the less-seasoned Ernest soon began to give way under this terrible strain, and Tom, for some wise purpose of his own, pretended to be equally ex-

hausted. So, on the second morning, Selim dismounted one of his own men and put the two boys upon the horse, with the perfect approval of the band, who were now fully alive to the value of their hostages.

"Ernie," said Tom that night, speaking French, as usual, "here's a glorious chance for us. I heard them say there are signs of a fog, and if it comes they won't be able to see us two yards off."

"But what good will that do?"

"*Everything!* To-morrow we'll pass a place that I've heard Sikander describe many a time—the Valley of Death, where you go along a path no broader than a teatray, with three hundred feet of precipice below, and overhead a great black cliff full of cracks and clefts, like that place half-way down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Now, you see, they leave our feet and hands free, and this scarf with which they tie us together is a trashy old thing, which one good tug ought to settle. If the fog comes, we'll wait till we get out on to the ledge, and the minute you hear me scream we'll tumble off on the side next the cliff, push the horse over the precipice, so that they may think we've all gone down together, and then creep into one of the holes and hide till they're gone. What do you say?"

"I'll do it," said Ernest, setting his teeth; "but can't we manage it without killing the poor old horse?"

"No; he must go; for *then*, don't you see, they'll think we've fallen over along with him, and not make any hunt for us. Now go to sleep while you can, old fellow, for you'll have enough to do to-morrow if the fog comes."

The fog *did* come, sure enough; and by the time they reached the perilous ledge path that overhung the terrible "Valley of Death," day was literally turned into night. But frightful as was the risk of such a passage in such weather, the Afghans durst not hang back, for they were now in the territory of a hostile clan, and the lives of the whole party might depend upon their getting across it as quickly as possible to the friendly tribes beyond. The horses had been shod with felt, and the perfectly noiseless passage of this long train of shadowy horsemen along the brink of that fearful precipice, through the gray, sullen mist, had in it something indescribably weird and ghostly. In that dead silence the excited boys could almost hear the loud throbbing of their own hearts.

Suddenly Tom Hilton set up a terrific shriek, which made every horse in the cavalcade start and rear. Instantly both lads were off their beast, the scarf that bound them was torn asunder, and as the poor horse fell headlong down the precipice, with a piercing cry, they wriggled into a narrow cleft, and were hidden from view.

CHAPTER IX.

LOST ON THE MOUNTAINS.

"So far, so good!" muttered Tom Hilton, as the wild cries of the Afghans died away in the distance. "Their horses have taken fright, and they'll have quite enough to do to manage *them*."

"I am sorry for that poor horse, though," said Ernest. "But what are we to do now?"

"Take the back track, to be sure, and find our way down into the valley by the same way that we came up. Those Goorkhas can't be far off, and once we sight *them*, we're all right."

Tom spoke as confidently as if the thing were already half done, and his cheeriness communicated itself to his companion, whose fatigue seemed quite forgotten in the delight of being free once more.

But, as those who have marched through Afghanistan know to their cost, it is easier to find one's way through the most pathless forests of Brazil, or over the widest prairies of the far West, than amid the fatal net-work of

mountains that reaches in one endless maze from the source of the Cabool River to the frontier of Kashgar. So long as the ledge path continued, indeed, they could not easily miss their way, there being not footing enough for a cat anywhere beyond its two or three feet of rocky surface. But it came to an end as suddenly as if the earth had swallowed it, and to the bewildered eyes of the wanderers the whole country seemed one endless succession of fathomless gulfs and unscalable precipices, among which they looked in vain for any trace of the way by which they had come. They were *lost!*

The two young explorers eyed each other in silent dismay as the fearful truth burst upon them; but even in this crisis Tom Hilton was ready with an idea.

"If we can't find our way back, Ernie, there's something else we can do, which is better than staying here and starving, anyhow. This is just the time when the Afghans mostly come down from the higher mountains, and we're likely enough to fall in with some of them. Now, I heard Selim say yesterday that all the people of

this district are special enemies of his tribe; so it seems to me that if we tell them we've just escaped from Selim's crowd, and give 'em the news of Ahmed Khan and all his men having been killed, they'll feel like giving us a good reception. Anyhow, I guess it's worth trying."

Ernest agreed that it was, and having discovered a goat track that led away to the left among the crags, they proceeded to follow it.

Suddenly Tom stopped short, held up his finger warningly, and crept forward to the edge of a projecting crag that flanked their path to the right, Ernest silently following.

Although a faint glow still lingered on the hill-top all below was already wrapped in deep shadow, but just at the foot of the cliff over which they were peering the gloom was broken by the glare of a huge fire, around which several tents were pitched, while a number of figures in Afghan dress could be seen constantly passing and repassing.

"I say," whispered Tom, "this is a case of 'out of the frying-pan into the fire.' These fellows are Selim's tribe too; I know them by the color of their turbans and the shape of their tents."

"But not the party we've escaped from, surely?"

"No; they're too numerous for that; they must be a war band out raiding, and a pretty strong one, too, or they wouldn't camp on the enemy's ground in this free and easy way. Now I vote we just wait till they're all asleep, and then go down and get hold of some food and a couple of guns, for when once we have arms and ammunition we can forage for ourselves."

Unhappily the Afghans seemed in no hurry to go to bed, and it was not until they were both almost benumbed with the raw chillness of the night air, which made itself felt even through the thick Afghan mantles given them by their late guardians, that Tom at length gave the word to descend.

The descent was almost as sheer as the side of a house, and had not the fire-light shown them where to plant their feet, they must certainly have been dashed to pieces. Even as it was Ernest twice escaped as if by a miracle from falling headlong to the bottom, and when they at length reached the ground below, both were so exhausted that they could hardly stand.

Luckily their descent had been perfectly noiseless, and the keenest eye could not have detected their figures amid the black shadows of the rocks. But the first glance showed them, to their no small dismay, that their difficulties were only beginning. Reckless as the Afghans were, they had not forgotten that they were on hostile ground, and the fire-glow played upon the tall figure of a sentinel who stood leaning upon the sickle-shaped butt-end of his long rifle not twenty yards from the spot where they lay.



EARLY AND LATE.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

WHEN Tom was a boy it was often said
That he never wanted to go to bed;
And he really appeared to take delight
In running about the streets at night.
Ah! much too long would have been the day,
And weary enough he'd have been of play,
If this very wide-awake little chap
Had not extended his morning nap.

He'd sit up with the owls, and with eyes as bright
As theirs, oh, ever so late at night;
But no one had a chance to remark
That Thomas ever arose with the lark.
"Early to bed and early to rise
Will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,"
Was an old-fashioned notion, Thomas said,
And well enough for a sleepy-head.

But as Tom grew older he left the owls,
And imitated domestic fowls
By going to bed, oh, not as he used,
But as soon as the chickens began to roost.
And he had no patience, I've heard them say,
With those who wanted to sleep all day,
For he was around and out-of-doors
In the early morning doing his chores.

And that is the way we turn about
From youth to age, there isn't a doubt;
And the very things that we once despised
Become the things that are highly prized.
And if when you're young you take delight
In being up with the owls all night,
When you are old you'll think it absurd
To copy the ways of so dull a bird.

THREE TRAPPERS.

BY PAUL E. WIRT.

"BOB, you may go along, if you want to, and help look after the traps," said Douglas Elton, the eldest of Mr. Elton's three sons, to their little five-year-old brother, one bright Saturday morning. The boys Doug and Will had been supplied with strong steel-traps by their father, and offered a reward for every musk-rat they should trap along his mill-race, or about the mill-pond up in the woods.

The Elton boys, like all lads, were fond of anything that resembled a hunting adventure. Will and Doug both thought that they would have liked to have gone through Africa with Paul Du Chaillu, whose books they were so fond of reading, and that the very finest fun the world could afford would be the capture of a gorilla in his native forest. But as circumstances confined them to their own village, and there were no gorillas nearer than Africa, the next best thing was steel-traps and musk-rats.

The rats had become very numerous, and by their burrowing under and around the dam, at the pond, and along the race were doing a deal of damage, causing the dam and race to leak seriously, and endangering the banks.

Doug instructed Will to get the oars, while he, with his mother's consent, prepared Bob for the trip. Will had a gun that he insisted on taking with him, saying, "It may be we will want to shoot something."

The little party started off up the race in high spirits to look after the traps that had been set the night before by Doug and the miller. They had put them in the most likely places, baiting them with various things, some with turnips, some with apples, others with fresh meat or a small ear of corn. There were ten traps in all, and the boys were in high glee, wondering and guessing what might be in them.

"Who knows but that we will have something in nearly every trap?" said Will. "There is such a lot of the creatures, anyway, that we can hardly fail to get half a dozen at least. Then if father gives us—"

Just at that moment a large blue jay flew screaming up

the race, and Will dropped his calculations in order to get his gun ready for a shot at the jay. But the bird had disappeared before the young hunter was more than half prepared, and he did not get a shot. Not long after this they arrived at the dam or pond in the woods.

The trees about the pond were in some places very thick or dense, and some were very large. It was quite a wild-looking place, and Will said he was glad he had brought his gun along. "Because," said he, "we might meet some awful big animal here, and then what would become of Bob if we had no gun?"

Doug explained that his gun would hardly be powerful enough to kill anything but a bird, but Will would not believe it, and said,

"You wait now, Doug, until we see a bear or something like that, and see me drop him."

They had now looked at one or two traps, and found nothing in them. On looking at the third it appeared that something had eaten all the bait, and in another they found some hair sticking in the teeth, which Will declared was bear hair.

Soon they came, after some scrambling along a rocky path, to an open space on the edge of the pond, where the boat lay. It was with a good deal of trouble that Bob was got through the tangle of the path, so that when they arrived at the boat he asked Doug to help him into it, and promised to sit there and wait until the boys had looked at a trap or two that had been set a short distance up a little creek.

After examining these traps it was their intention to cross the pond, and look at the traps on the other side. Doug could manage a boat very well, and swim like a fish; and, more than that, he was strong and careful; and so it was that his mother and father trusted him to go about almost anywhere and take Bob with him.

Doug lifted Bob safely into the boat, tied the rope to a stake on the bank. Then they started to look at the traps just a little way up the creek. This time they felt sure of not being disappointed. They considered the creek an especially good place to catch something, and they approached the traps through the little jungle very carefully.

As they neared the first one they heard a great snort, and beheld a terrible shaking of the bushes about the place where the trap had been set.

"Hurrah!" cried Will. "We've got something this time sure, and it's no musk-rat, either."

Something had been caught, evidently, and the creature, whatever it was, seemed to be making a wild effort to tear the trap to pieces. Neither Will nor Doug was accustomed to the sound of a bear's voice, but the noise they heard might easily be taken for a growl.

Will plunged boldly forward, and Doug followed close behind his brother, though, if the truth were told, his heart was beating quite rapidly, and his desire to encounter wild beasts in their native forests was lessening at every step.

An opening in the wood presently showed them a large black animal caught in the trap, and struggling wildly to get loose.

"Where's your gun, Will?"

"I've got it here all right."

"Now's your time. Don't go any nearer." Doug evidently felt that they were within close enough range, and that it would be folly to attack a bear in too close quarters. Not that he was afraid—oh no!

"Stop till I take aim. You were the one who didn't want me to bring the gun. I tell you it will be the means of saving all our lives."

"Bang!"

There was a loud report. Over went Will backward, the gun having a decided genius for what is known as "kicking." Apparently, too, the shot had taken effect.

There was a terrible snort coming from the spot where

the trap lay, a sudden pull, and away rushed the black wild thing through the thick bushes toward the pond, the trap sprung tightly around one foot, and its chain dangling and jingling about its heels.

"Will, are you dead?" Doug's tone was decidedly tearful.

"Not a bit of it." The hero of the successful shot scrambled to his feet. "Where has the bear gone?"

Where, oh, where?

There was the blankest silence for about a minute. Then another snort and a wild rustling among the bushes told them that their prey was rushing off in exactly the direction where the boat lay. Doug and Will stared at each other an instant, and then, hearing a little scream from Bob, they tore with sinking hearts toward the boat.

In a few minutes they had reached it. To their horror, they beheld the little craft being rapidly towed out into the middle of the pond by the black creature, whose head was barely above water, and which to the view of the excited boys appeared to be the head of some unknown black animal, with a great fringe of long gray hair about its shoulders and neck.

The chain attached to the trap around the leg of the animal had become entangled in the rope of the boat as it dashed down to the bank, and now the terrible creature was swimming rapidly out into the pond with poor, pale, frightened Bob clinging wildly to the boat.

What was to be done?

Whatever his accomplishments as a hunter may have been, Will was a bright lad, and the sight of his darling little brother Bob towed away toward destruction by the wild brute which he had infuriated with his powder and shot nearly drove him frantic. Quick-witted in this moment of great trouble, he pulled off his boots and coat, and placed his open jackknife between his teeth. Then running around to a point of land that ran out into the pond, where the distance to the moving boat would be shorter, he plunged fearlessly into the water.

Then began an exciting chase. Will knew something terrible might happen to Bob any moment if not cut loose from the swimming animal. He could not make out what the creature was. In fact, he was too frightened to observe closely. Away went the boat, heading across the pond, and in hot pursuit swam Will, gaining upon the boat at every stroke.

But the boat had nearly reached the opposite shore before he caught up, and just as he laid his hand upon the stern it struck the projecting limb of a dead tree in the pond. In an instant Bob was shaken from his seat into the cold water by the furious plunging of the animal as it rushed up the bank.

The rope stood the test no longer, but broke, and the beast tore off through the bushes with the chain again dangling at its heels. Will, clinging to the boat with one hand, caught Bob's clothing with the other, and after a little struggle both reached the bank. Drenched and cold, they clambered into the boat, and pulled for the opposite shore.

Here they found Doug. He was an exceedingly frightened boy, and the embrace he gave his two brothers showed what he had suffered during that terrible swim.

"Oh, Will! First you nearly shot yourself, and now you've nearly drowned Bob and yourself too. Do let's go home."

"All right, old fellow; but how about those adventures you were always wanting to have?"

"I think I'd rather read about them than go through them. Wasn't it an awful beast?" Doug's teeth fairly chattered.

It was an exciting story that they had to tell to their parents. Will declared the animal to have been of "awful size, black, and furious." The wound that he gave it when he shot at it must, according to his description, have

been of a deadly character. Little Bob was too frightened to give any account at all. Doug said he did not get one fair look at it, and could not say what it was. Will, however, came in for great praise for so bravely swimming and saving his little brother.

At dinner that night, while the event was still being discussed, there came from the lane that passed the house a familiar grunt! grunt! grunt! In a moment more the listening party heard the occasional rattle of a chain dragged leisurely along the ground.

This brought Will to his feet and to the door in an instant. In another moment all had followed him, and were at the door, looking inquiringly at Mr. Elton's long thin black hog, with a trap, a chain, and part of a rope dangling to one of its hind-legs, while about its neck was a yoke, lately placed there by the miller to prevent it from rooting, etc. About the yoke had become entangled vines, dried grasses, moss, and the like, which gave hoggy a very foreign air.

The whole family looked upon hoggy a moment, and hoggy looked upon the family. Then all laughed heartily, save his hogship, who grunted himself slowly into the barn-yard, laid himself wearily down, and slept, dreaming of traps, mill-ponds, boats, small boys, and big boys with and without guns.

WORK FOR NIMBLE FINGERS.

LUNCH BAG.

SOME strong and durable material, such as carriage leather or enamelled cloth, is best to make the bag of, and the most serviceable lining is stiff light brown paper, which can be frequently and readily renewed. The bag is not sewed, but is held together instead by steel studs buttons slipped through slits, or else by shank buttons held by a ring inside.

Cut the outside material ten inches wide and eighteen long, and the lining an inch narrower and two inches shorter; slope both a little narrower toward the ends, which form the top of the bag. Cut two strips, for the sides, four inches wide and twenty-three long, and slope them down to a width of three inches along the middle, nine inches; bend down both ends to make the strips as long as the front and back together, and turn down the side edges an inch. Cut a flap four inches deep to hang inside the top of the bag. Now turn in the inch of material that projects around the edge, bend in the bottom, and that of the sides as well, in the manner shown in the illustration, and then make the slits for the buttons an inch apart along the edges, being careful to make those of the flap and sides correspond with those on the front and back. Prepare two ribbon handles, to be fastened in with the top buttons, and the parts of the bag will be ready to button together.

A little decorative stitching, worked with thick saddlers' silk, will improve the appearance of the front.

PINCUSHION.

Make the covering for the cushion, which may be either square or oblong, of dark-colored silk or satin. To decorate the silk for the top cut a large flower or other figure out of a piece of gay-colored cretonne; vein or mark it with stitches in colored silks and gold thread; then, having pasted it on the silk to keep it in place while working, sew it down around the edge with gold-colored silk. Sew a thick colored cord around the edge of the cushion over the seam.

SKATE BAG.

Two pieces of dark green cloth or flannel, sixteen inches long and seven wide, are required for the outside of the bag, and two pieces of leather or enamelled cloth for the lining, cut half an inch narrower and an inch shorter



LUNCH BAG.

than the cloth pieces. Slope the bottom to a point as shown in the illustration, and work an appropriate outline design or motto on one side with bright-colored silks. Sew up the outside of the bag, then sew up and set in the lining; hem the top, and run a thick cord into the hem. A handle made of a double strip of the cloth, sixteen inches long, is attached at the sides.

GIRL'S KNITTED GLOVE.

A ball of fine knitting silk and some No. 19 steel knitting-needles are required to work these gloves. Begin at the wrist, casting on 224 stitches; the number will be considerably less after the scalloped cuff is finished and the hand reached. In the first 3 rounds knit 7 stitches and purl 7 by turns. 4th round.—* Knit 5 stitches, knit 2 together, purl 5, purl 2 together; continue to repeat from *. For the next 3 rounds knit 6 and purl 6 by turns. 8th round.—* Knit 4, knit 2 together, purl 4, purl 2 together; repeat from *. In the following 3 rounds knit 5 and purl 5 by turns. 12th round.—* Knit 3, knit 2 together, purl 3, purl 2 together; repeat from *. For the next 3 rounds knit 4 and purl 4 by turns. 16th round.—* Knit 2, knit 2 together, purl 2, purl 2 together; repeat from *. In the following 3 rounds knit 3 and purl 3 by turns. 20th round.—* Knit 1, knit 2 together, purl 1, purl 2 together; repeat from *. For the next 2 rounds knit 2 and purl 2 by turns. 23d round.—By turns put the thread around the needle and knit 2 stitches together; in the next round, when the thread loops are knitted off like stitches, a row of small holes will be formed, through which an elastic braid or a narrow ribbon is drawn when the glove is finished.

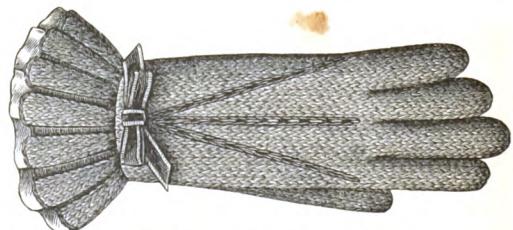
Now continue in plain knitting for the hand. It will take about 76 rounds, or a few more or less, according to the



PINCUSHION.

length. In the 9th of these rounds begin the thumb gusset by purling the 37th and 39th stitches; in the 11th round begin to widen for the gusset, and to do so knit 1 stitch and purl 1 besides out of the 38th stitch; in the 15th round knit 1 and purl 1 out of each stitch of the preceding widening, and continue to widen in this manner after every 3 rounds to the 49th, inclusive, when the gusset must be 18 stitches wide; during this time always purl the edge stitch on each side of the gusset in every second round. Having knitted 4 rounds after the last widening, prepare for the thumb itself. Divide the 18 stitches of the gusset on two needles, and, leaving the rest of the stitches aside for the time being, set up 8 new stitches on a third needle, and knit the thumb on these 26; knit about 36 rounds, and then begin to point it; to do this narrow by knitting 2 stitches together 5 times at regular intervals in the next round, and then in every following second round narrow above each narrowing in the preceding round until the stitches are all exhausted, when fasten the end of the thread securely.

After the thumb is finished pick up 8 stitches out of the loops of the 8 cast on at the beginning of it, and continue the hand until the tops of the fingers are reached. Narrow at both the beginning and end of the 8 stitches, 3 times, each time after an interval of 2 rounds. Take up the little finger first, setting aside for it the first 8 and the last 8 stitches on two needles, and casting on 6 new

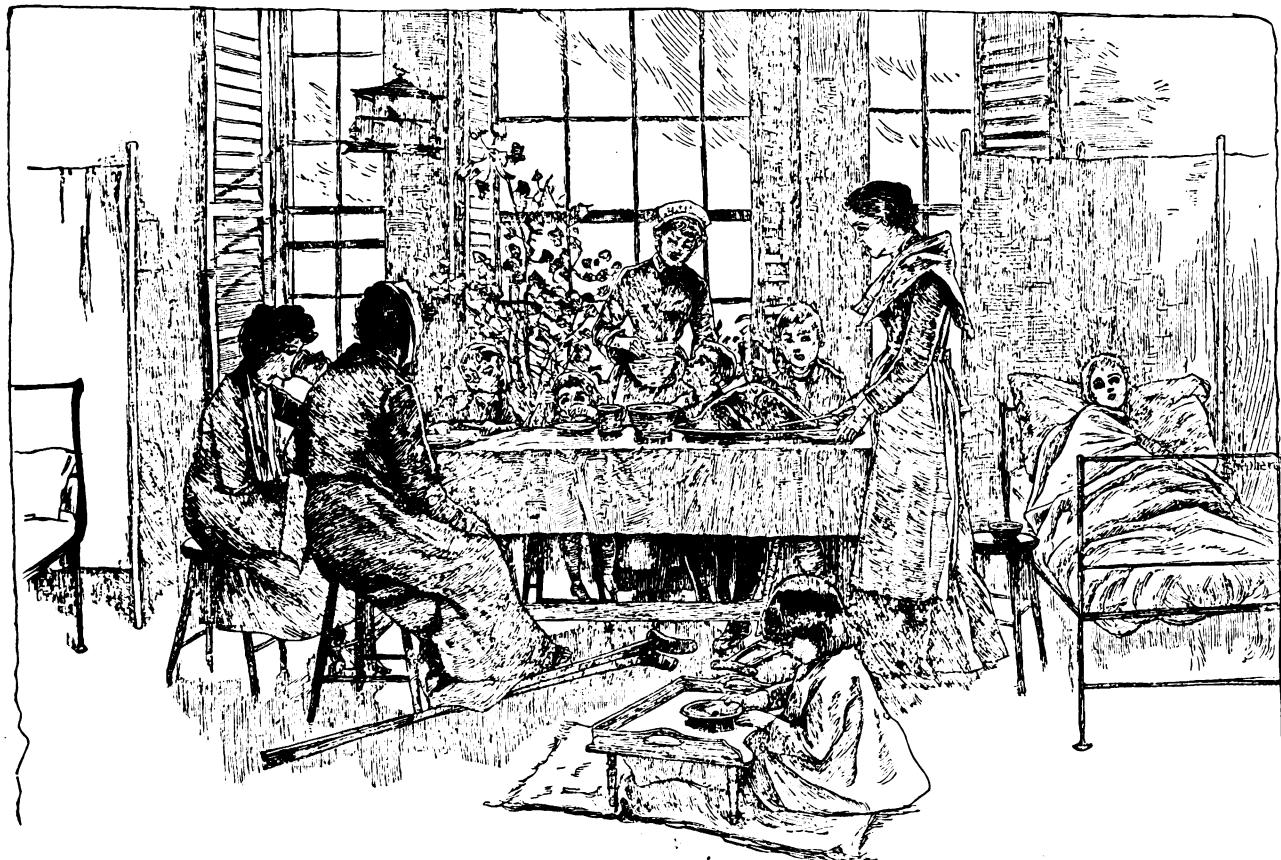


GIRL'S KNITTED GLOVE.

stitches on a third; in the 3d round of the finger narrow on both sides of the 6 new stitches; about 30 rounds will be needed for it; point it in the manner described for the thumb.

Next, for the third finger, take up 6 stitches out of the loops of the 6 cast on for the little finger, put 8 from the back of the hand and 7 from the palm on separate needles, and cast on 6 new stitches; knit the finger to the required length, about 38 rounds, but in the 2d, 3d, and 4th rounds narrow at the inner or palm end of the 6 new stitches and of the 6 taken up from the little finger. For the middle finger take up the 6 cast on for the third, cast on 6 new stitches, and take a few more stitches from both the back and the palm than for the third finger; otherwise knit it in the same way. For the forefinger, which comes last, take the rest of the stitches from the hand, and the 6 at the side of the middle finger; work it to the same length as the third.

Finally, work three chain-stitched lines on the back of the hand with a crochet needle, and set a ribbon frill inside the cuff.



"A REAL THANKSGIVING DINNER."

THANKSGIVING AT BELLEVUE HOSPITAL.

BY AUNT MARJORIE PRECEPT.

Did it ever happen, little ones, that three or four of you had the measles at the same time, and mamma had to turn part of the house into a hospital? Perhaps it was a great airy room on an upper floor, and there, quite away from the rest of the family, you spent some days or weeks. The time, of course, seemed very long, but you had plenty of toys and story-books to amuse you, and were as comfortable as it was possible for children to be when ill and obliged to stay in bed.

The getting well again, however, was very pleasant—indeed, almost jolly—and one of the most delightful things about it came when you began to care what they sent up for your meals. Such tea parties and luncheons as you had when the doctor said you were little convalescents (a big word which simply means that you were getting well again), and would soon be off the sick-list! And then good-by to the hospital!

Well, the children who were well enough to eat a Thanksgiving dinner at Bellevue Hospital last week enjoyed it a great deal more than you did your tea party. It seems a sad thing to say, but many of the little folk who are lying ill in this great building have nothing so pleasant in all their lives as the days they spend here, though many hours are spent in severe pain, and the time only comes now and then when they can enjoy a meal or find any pleasure in the playthings that are provided for them.

Everything at the hospital is clean and quiet and safe. The nurses, in their white caps and aprons, have bright, merry faces, and their voices are sweet and gentle. The doctors are strong and kind, and know just what to do to ease an aching limb or soothe a dreadful pain. Nobody is cross. There is no hiding under the bed or in the cor-

ner for fear of a poor drunken father, who has been taking vile poisonous stuff until he does not know what he is doing, and is ready to beat and kick the children and their tired, frightened mother.

Many a little child who is brought to Bellevue, and placed in one of the neat cots in the Children's Ward, has been made ill through the carelessness or fury of parents whom liquor has changed into brutes. Others have been made ill by the bad air or the scanty food in their dark and crowded tenement homes. Here they have the pure air that blows from the broad East River to breathe, and all day the sun looks in at the shining windows, and the doctors say there is no better medicine than sunlight for the little patients.

Can you wonder that the children sometimes cry, and are very sorry, when the time comes for them to go home? They must leave the large, airy, pleasant rooms, the good doctor they have learned to love, the little friends they have made in the ward, and their own special nurse.

There were no tears on Thanksgiving-day. Of course not. All who were well enough had a real Thanksgiving dinner (turkey, and cranberry sauce, and—think of it!—pumpkin-pie) at a real table, which was drawn away from its place, and set for them on purpose. Those who were not well enough to be out of bed, but were well enough to have a drumstick or a taste of jelly, sat up among their pillows, and took their dinners there.

The nicest part of it all was that nobody was left out of the fun. The very sick ones, even, knew it was Thanksgiving-day, and were glad. Kind ladies and gentlemen came and looked at them. The parched lips were refreshed with oranges or white grapes, but the kindness was better. And some of the ladies could sing, and they sang so sweetly that the children felt as though the hospital were heaven.



DREFFUL HARD.

Drefful hard such lessons
For 'litt mites of dirls,
We fwown all up our foreheads,
And wuffle up our turs.
Wi's teacher had to study,
An' then prehaps sh'd find,
To dix such drefful lessons
It isn't vewy tind.

OUR POST-OFFICE BOX.

AMONG the most delightful experiences which come to the conductors of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE are such letters as the one which follows. Heartily thanking the writer for her cordial, womanly words, we invite to them the special attention of parents, teachers, and friends of the young:

St. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

I am not one of the dear little girls who write so prettily of baby brothers and sisters, dollies, and dainty cooking receipts, neither am I one of the honest, bright-faced boys who tell of their various home lives from all over the world, but am instead the mamma of several girls and boys who think that HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE is one of the necessities of life, and I am inclined to agree with them; for nourishing food for the brains is as necessary as for the body, and where can better or more instructive brain food be found than in your invaluable paper, even including that interesting but hardly edible, though useful, creature the angle-worm?

What a power the paper is! It is really beyond estimating, and the unseen influence it exerts will never be known until the time when all secrets are revealed. Let me tell you of one instance connected with the Exchange Department. Over two years ago a little boy living in a large Western city sent an exchange for stamps. His name was a peculiar one, and as he supposed his family was the only one of that name in the city, he was greatly surprised to find another exchange next to his with the same peculiar name. The surprise was mutual, and as the two lived near neighbors, an acquaintance was soon made. No. 2 proved to be a young man alone, and a stranger in a strange city, with no friends, but living a remarkably upright life, though exposed to all the temptations of a great city. The new-found friends took pity on the lonely stranger, and made him one of themselves, and with them he is commencing what promises to be an honorable if not a brilliant career. So much from an exchange for stamps. I have, for want of space, only given you the outlines of a true story, but, if I am not mistaken, even that will interest you. I have long wanted to write to you my appreciation of and delight in your paper, but numerous home duties have always interfered. Like a large body which, though slow to move, goes with great speed and to a great distance when once started, so I fear my letter has been carried to an unreasonable length now that it has been fairly commenced. Please, however, consider as the lever that started it the sincere admiration of one who signs herself, very truly yours,

AUNT FANNIE.

STOUGHTON, WISCONSIN.

We live on a farm; we used to live in Chicago, but we like the farm best. There is a lovely lake here, and we live right on the bank. We have lots of hens and chickens, and they are nearly all pets and named, so we never could begin to tell them. Our colts are pets too, and they are Clover, Buttercup, Baby, and Bessie. Paper threshed a short time ago, and we got four little mice out of the stack. We made a cage little like the one in YOUNG PEOPLE, and they seemed to enjoy it running up the little ladder, but at last they squeezed out through the bars, and our little kitten, named Queenie, caught them.

I want to tell you about my pictures. I have nearly three hundred, and think them very interesting to look at. I cut them from HARPER'S WEEKLY. Katie received some silk patches from a little girl in Massachusetts. The postmark is

indistinct, and she wants so much to send her the ferns; there is no name. We both love HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, and especially the Post-office Box and Exchange; it is so nice to know the children's names, and what they do, and that they are reading the same stories we are. With much love to the Postmistress, we are,

JESSIE AND KATIE R.

If the little Massachusetts girl sees this, will she write to the Postmistress, please, and give her name and full address?

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

I want to tell the boys and girls about a little game mamma made up, and we enjoy very much. We call it Mother Goose. First one begins by repeating a rhyme from Mother Goose as fast as she can; then the next goes on with another, without a pause. It is very funny, because we get mixed up so that we don't know what is coming next.

This is my first letter to you, though we have read the letters for four years in the paper.

ALICE HOUGHTON B.

ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO.

It is almost a year since I got YOUNG PEOPLE for a Christmas present. I like it so well I think I can hardly do without it next year. I am nine years old, and I go to school. I tried the Dolls' Cup Cake, and found it very nice. I would like to join the Little Housekeepers. If you print this letter, I will send some receipts next time I write. I have some flowers of my own, of which I take the greatest care. I have two sisters; their names are Gertie and Luella. My name is

WINNIE G.

WALTON, NEW YORK.

My birthday came on the 28th of October, and I was then nine years of age. Last summer I went up to Oquago Lake, in Broome County. It is a sheet of water nearly a mile long and a half-mile wide. There are row-boats and sail-boats in plenty there, and I enjoyed rowing. The water is one hundred and ten feet deep in many places. It is very pretty up there, with its green hills, tall trees, beautiful wild flowers, and pretty mosses. There were nice cottages filled with people seeking rest and pleasure.

Walton is a large village, with six churches, and a graded school, which I attend. I love to study, and I go to Sunday-school, which numbers over three hundred scholars.

I have taken YOUNG PEOPLE nearly two years, and like it very much. I like Mrs. Lillie's stories; am reading "Dick and D." with great interest.

HELEN ROSE S.

PENNSGROVE, NEW JERSEY.

I am a little boy only six years old. I am so small that the people call me Tom Thumb. I weigh thirty-six pounds. I go to school, and know my letters, but I can not write, so my papa is writing this for me; but as soon as I get big I will write you a letter myself. We live on the eastern shore of the Delaware River, and we see lots of steamboats and ships. I have three brothers and three sisters, and we are all glad when HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE comes. Please publish this if you have room.

ALVIN D. K.

PARIS, FRANCE.

I am a little Boston girl twelve years old, and last June I came to Europe with my papa, mamma, sister, and brother. Now my papa has gone home, and each week he sends me the dear little journal HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, and all the little people who read this paper will know what a comfort it is to me when I am so far away from my dear home. My sister and I read all the stories in the paper, and then read them aloud to my little brother, who is as yet unable to read. After we have read all the stories, we often copy the pictures, and paint them. In the last paper, after reading the story of "A Deed of Darkness," I copied the picture of dear little black "Desdy," and painted it, and it is now on its way to America, and will soon greet my own papa.

I see so many queer things here in Paris that will amuse the little people who read this paper that I can not resist the desire I have to tell you a few of the queer sights one sees here, so different from American sights. Each Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday is a market-day, and all the farmers, with their wives, donkeys, and carts, come into Paris and unload their provisions, some in the covered markets, and some in streets where the sidewalks are very wide, they taking the outer half of the sidewalk, where they put up their stalls, and sell all kinds of fruits, vegetables, meats, eggs, fish, and indeed provisions of all kinds, and many little shell-fishes we never see at home. One kind of shell-fish is just like our lobster, but about two inches in length, and I have a great desire to take one home with me, but the French people tell me that they would soon decay, and be offensive. Another kind of shell-fish is like our lobster, without the claws, and is about half as large as the other kind, and is nearly black head, and has two large staring eyes like black beads. There are always plenty of sweet little live rabbits of different colors, which are when bought instantly killed, or else carried off by the cook in a way that makes me

wish I could buy every little rabbit in Paris to save them from their sad fate. The women who tend these stalls are neatly dressed, with white cap and apron, and if I ask the price of anything they talk so fast, and seem determined to make me buy whether I care to or not. At these markets they also sell dry-goods of all descriptions, flowers, crockery, tinware, and boots and shoes, and they are always cheaper than one can buy them in a shop. People know that the vegetables will all be fresh in all the markets all over Paris on these market-days, so it is not strange that we meet at every turn ladies with their servants, and the servants carrying a huge basket filled with provisions enough to last until the next market-day. You find these sidewalk markets all about Paris; you come upon them when you least expect it, and I find it rare fun to watch them and try to talk French to the women. At exactly three o'clock in the afternoon the policemen appear and order the marketmen off, and it is always wonderful to me the short time in which they get themselves and their goods into their carts and are off. Some have great carts and little donkeys. The carts are so shaped that when they are loaded the donkey is nearly covered up. Other carts are pulled by men and women, who are harnessed into them with leather straps; they are too poor to keep a horse or donkey.

My sister and I go with our *bonne*, or some grown person, to market nearly every market-day, and with us we take our tops which are so different from those we have at home that I must tell you about them. They are nearly the same size from top to bottom, and are taller than our tops, and in order to keep them going we have to whip them with a little whip which has a long lash (which, I think, has been described in your paper). We can only keep them going from one crossing to another, so we have to start them very often, which is not very easy to do. The way we start them is to stick them upright in some dirt at the foot of a tree, and whip them until they get on to the sidewalk, and then each lash we give them makes them walk along in any direction we like.

The workmen and work-women work on Sunday as well as any other day. You see them sweeping the streets. They wear large wooden shoes on their feet, and have large brooms made of the twigs and branches of the trees that grow outside the city. Chimney-sweeps as well as street-sweepers work on Sunday, and much to my mamma's horror two came last Sunday and insisted upon cleaning the chimney, and after it was done asked for *pour boire*, which means a little money for drink, which is always expected if a workman or work-woman does anything for one.

I have just been out to walk a little way, and saw outside a shop door some chestnuts three times as large as the largest ones we have at home. And I will finish this letter now, as I bought a pound of them, for I am in haste to see if they are as good as the American ones, and in my next letter I will tell you if they are.

MARTIE LE B. S.

A very bright letter, and the bright eyes that read it will be quite eager to have Martie write again, and tell of other things which she sees in Paris.

Kosciusko, MISSISSIPPI.

This is my first letter. I wanted to write sooner, but was afraid I could not write well enough. Last summer we went over to Norway to visit our aunt and uncle, but when we got there we found that she was dead. I have six little pet canaries, and have two cages for them. I took them with me when we went over to Norway; they sang nearly all the time, but while we were on the ship one of them died. I was so sorry, because it was the largest one of them all. But while we were on the ocean I got awfully seasick, and wished I was back at home. I had a pet dog; we called him Can, because he would breach, and do anything else we wanted him to do; but he got seasick as well as the rest of us. He did not die; I gave him to my little cousin in Norway.

I have one of the prettiest little nephews here staying with me; he is only three years old, and is as smart and pretty as he can be. He thinks so much of my grown sister, because she pets him and gives him everything he wants. He is the pet of the family. My father and mother are both old people, but my father is the oldest. We live out in the country. My father has a large farm, with a large white house on it, and my mother raises all sorts of fowls. Mamma gave me a hen, with sixteen little pet chicks, one turkey, and two pet pigs. They are just as fat. Please, Mrs. Postmistress, print my letter.

LEE S.

BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY.

I thought I would write you a letter, and tell about my trip to the Southern Exposition at Louisville. It was on the second day of the National Dog Show. I wish all the little boys who read YOUNG PEOPLE could have been there to see the big and little dogs, the fat and lean dogs. If I could have had my choice I would have taken a large mastiff worth \$600, and then I would have ridden him to see you; but you would have been surprised to see a Kentucky boy, coming from a State where they have such fine horses, riding a

dog, would you not? I liked the Art Gallery best of all, and the picture of the two donkeys better than anything in it.

I go to Ogden College, and as I am only eleven, I am the youngest boy. I study Latin, English Grammar, Physical Geography, and White's Complete Arithmetic. I like the professor in physical geography very much; he not only explains how coral grows, but how my toe-nails grow. I ride a horse named Prince, and have a pony called by that good old Anglo-Saxon name Betsey. She is just two years old, but very gentle. I ride her without a bridle.

R. C. P. T.

RED BLUFF, CALIFORNIA.

I am a little boy ten years old. I am attending school here, and like to go very much. I live right on the banks of the Sacramento River. Sometimes the water rises very high. Two years ago we had a flood, and the water was up to the third step of six steps which lead into our house. It took our chicken-house away, but the chickens were on the back porch. I have not many pets—only two dogs, one of which is up in the mountains. We have about one hundred and twenty-five chickens, three turkeys, five geese, and four ducks, and, best of all, a little Jersey calf, and her name is Betsey Bobbet, and we have about one hundred and fifty pigeons. I have a brother nine years old, who is my constant playfellow, but I have no sisters. Where we live is beautifully situated in the northern part of the Sacramento Valley, which is nearly surrounded by mountains covered with snow most of the year, among which are Mount Shasta and Lassens Buttes. It is my bed-time now, and I will bid you good-night.

WINNIE B. L.

WATERTOWN, DAKOTA TERRITORY.

I am ten years old. I have no pets except a white cow. She is very gentle; I take care of her, and like her very much. I go to school; I am in room No. 3. There are about forty scholars in our room. I am in the highest class, and am in the Fourth Reader. I study reading, spelling, arithmetic, and geography. My partners and I intend to catch fish and rabbits, and sell them and make lots of money.

VODDIE H.

NEW YORK CITY.

We are two little girls, Ellie and Alice. We both live together. Alice is thirteen years old, and Ellie is fifteen years old. We are great friends, and we thought we would make up a letter to write to you. We love to read the other letters very much, and we would like this letter to be published very much too. We have three pets, and they are all canaries—Nell and Dick and Gypsy. The other birds we had were very cunning. Cherrie was one. He died, and I cried; but I got over that. And we had another bird, and his name was Santa Claus. Don't you think that was a funny name for a bird? We got it one Christmas. We have a big play-house; it is so big that I can go into it; it is a lovely house. We have a big doll; she is thirty years old. I hope you will be pleased with this letter, for it is our first, and I hope all the little girls who read this will be pleased with it too. Alice wrote this letter, because Ellie's eyes are very weak. We have just got through with some nice nuts and candy. We now have to close, with much love from Ellie and Alice, and a kiss from each of us.

ALICE D. M. and ELLIE A. R.

NORWICH, CONNECTICUT.

I am a little girl nine years old. I have three pets—two kittens and a bird. My kittens' names are Lion and Tabby; the bird's name is Buttercup. I have a dear little brother; his name is Tommy; he is a dimpling darling. I go to school every day. I like my teacher very much. I have been out in the country all summer; I had a nice time. I saw the cows and horses; I drove the cows home every night from pasture. I can ride horseback. I like to feed the chickens.

MARY A. F.

TRENTON, MISSOURI.

I have a pony. My papa keeps a livery-stable. I like the story of "The Lost City" very much. I have a little sister eight years old. I go to school, and I like my teacher very much. I read in the Fourth Reader.

We have a fine school-house. I am nine years old, and have been taking HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE for four years.

NYACK, NEW YORK.

I go to school, and my lessons are arithmetic, reading, geography, grammar, spelling, and writing. I am twelve years old, and am on the third floor. I like my teacher very much; she helps me with my lessons. I live nearly a mile from the school. My brother goes to school too. My brother Louie and I went nutting lately, and we got a great many nuts. Louie has spurs, so he could climb a great many trees that other boys could not climb. We have a large tree, of which the limbs are at the top, and no one can climb it unless he has a ladder; it has very large nuts on it. I have a little brother who is two years and one month old; he goes to Sunday-school, and is very good; he doesn't make any noise at all; he is in the infant class, and mamma teaches that. His

name is Eddie. He runs around the floor, and plays horse, and sits down on the top of the cat and plays with it. My brother takes YOUNG PEOPLE, and we all look for it on Tuesday. Eddie likes to look at the pictures, and so do we all; it has such pretty pictures in it. I hope this is not too long to be printed. I must go to my lessons, so I will have to say good-by.

ANNIE W.

FORT SNELLING, MINNESOTA.

I live six miles from St. Paul. I go to school, and study history, geography, reading, spelling, and arithmetic. I have an Indian pony, and she is very pretty; her name is Indian Sioux. Last summer I had a garden. I like Paul Du Chatif and James Otis. The stories I like the best are "Raising the Pearl," "Reg," and "The Lost City."

I give you the list of books I have read: *My Apangi Kingdom, Swinton's United States History, Toby Tyler, Stories of the Gorilla Country, Lost in the Jungle, Wild Life Under the Equator, The Country of the Dwarfs*. I am ten years old.

WILLIAM J. R.

You are forming a taste for very good reading.

NORTH WILBRAHAM, MASSACHUSETTS.

Although one of the older ones, I am an admiring reader of YOUNG PEOPLE, and have been for several years. Like many others, I think it the best paper ever printed for the young, and try to think of anything that could possibly improve it.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to its columns for many hours of pleasure, for knowledge of various persons, places of note, and many other things too numerous to mention.

GRACIA A. S.

Thank you very much for these kind words.

RIVERDALE, VIRGINIA.

We are two little sisters ten and eight years old. We have been wanting to write to the Post-office Box for some time. We have two brothers and two little sisters. One of our sisters has a little colt named Stella. Helen has a cat named Tabby. We have two pet chickens named Gentle and Modjeska. Our uncle sends one of our brothers YOUNG PEOPLE; when it comes we don't do anything but read. We are so fond of the paper that we don't know what we will do when the subscription runs out. Lillie takes *Our Little Ones and Nursery*, but loves YOUNG PEOPLE best.

Please print our letter, as it is our first to a paper.

LILLIE and HELEN B.

Perhaps that kind uncle will renew the subscription when he finds how much you all enjoy YOUNG PEOPLE.

NEW YORK CITY.

I have often wanted to write to you, but I can not write very plainly, so mamma is going to write for me. My mamma is going to take me some day to see the children in St. Mary's Hospital, that you used to tell about in the Post-office Box. I am a little boy eight years old, and I have no brothers or sisters to play with. I have a cat with no name, and she has five kittens, but we are boarding in the city, and they are in the country, where I can not see them. I am very lonely; some because I have no one to play with. I have never written to you before, so I hope you will print this. I shall watch every week for it, and then I will show it to my papa, and surprise him.

LEO Y.

When you go to St. Mary's you will see the little fellow who is in Harper's Young People's Cot, and you may give him my love.

DECATER, ILLINOIS.

I am eight years old. I have not seen any letters from here, so I thought I would write to you. I have a little brother named Charlie, and I love him very much. I have a cat, and some chickens. I have taken YOUNG PEOPLE ever since it was first published, and like it real well. I go to school every day; I am in the Third Reader, and study writing, arithmetic, and geography. I hope my letter is not too long, and that I may see it in print, as it is the first I have written. I remain yours,

ANNA E. C.

The next letter, though brief, pleases me very much. A young lady who is at fourteen her father's housekeeper, and the teacher of her young sister, deserves great praise:

PINNEY POINT, MARYLAND.

Though HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE comes in the name of my younger sister, my father, my brother (who is seventeen years old), and myself all enjoy it quite as much as she does. I think "Nan" was a lovely story, and I was glad to see that Mrs. Lillie was going to write another. I am fourteen years old, and have been keeping house for my father four years. There are no schools around here, so I have to teach my sister. I do not live over a mile from Pinney Point Hotel, where perhaps some of the readers of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE have been during the summer. A good many guests come there to fish and bathe.

I hope you will print this, as it is the first I have ever written to you. I am, dear Postmistress, your friend,

NELLIE M. I.

As my sister was writing to you, I thought that I would add a postscript. I will be eleven on the 9th of November, and have been taking HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE since last Christmas, and I think it is the best magazine I ever read. My sister and I have for pets a dog named Ginn, a little gray kitten named Grayson, and a colt named Molly Bawn. I think that "Dick and D." was a lovely story.

SADIE A. L.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

I am a little girl twelve years old. We are always glad to have Wednesday come, so we can get the paper. I have no pets now, as our little water-spaniel died this summer up in the country, but I am going to have a bird. My papa is an artist. I take drawing lessons, and I guess I am going to be an artist too. With love to the Postmistress.

HERMINIA R.

Thanks for letters received are due to Hattie J. P., Nellie J., Sarah L., Thomas L. K., Nellie K., Constance, Herbert M. B., Flora R., Belle A., Willie Shirley P., Katie L. J., John A. S., Nellie D., Emma L., George C. L., June, Philip S. R., Harry R. W., Georgia D., F. C. M., Nina J., Addie B., Daisy W., Grace E. P., F. B. M., Gracie A. C., Charles D., Edith S. W., Ella G., Lucy G., Elsie L., Julia and H. L., Mamie S., Myrtle C., Winnie W., Ida Alice P., and A. R. D.

Mary W. and Pearl H.: I am glad you both like the paper so very much, and very sorry that Mary has been ill.—Hatty F., 308 Broadway, Kansas City, Missouri: No, indeed, I do not think Western girls at all behind Eastern ones. In fact, I think the children everywhere are wonderfully clever. Hatty is studying German, and would like to correspond in that language with some other little student.—Louie S. B.: I would so much have liked to publish this letter, my dear, but there is no room. I hope you will always write when you feel like doing so.

Willie Lee F., Sadee R. O., May R., and Bertha R., all the way from Meridian, Mississippi, sent very successful Indian-summer letters.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

1. Belonging to a city. 2. Order of silence. 3. Pointed. 4. A monstrous bird. 5. A dark fluid. 6. At one time. 7. A guardian. Initials and finals read downward give a vehicle and a word meaning to variegated.

No. 2.

ENIGMA.

My first is in Jew's-harp, but not in guitar. My second is in tobacco, but not in cigar. My third is in watch, but not in guard. My fourth is in garden, but not in yard. My fifth is in organ, but not in drum. My sixth is in candy, but not in gum. My seventh is in scholar, but not in school. My eighth is in command, but not in rule. My ninth is in assembly, but not in communion. My whole was a President of the Union.

MAMIE C. R.

No. 3.

A WORD SQUARE.

1. A girl's name. 2. A sign. 3. Is not action. 4. Is before.

MAMIE C. R.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 21.

No. 1.—1. Rye. 2. Dovey. 3. Scilly. 4. Harrow. 5. Wick. 6. Shin. 7. Mare. 8. Tees. 9. Reading. 10. Cowes. 11. Man. 12. Hull. 13. Don. 14. Dec. 15. Wye. 16. Sybil. 17. The Wash. 18. Bath. 19. Holyhead. 20. Tay. 21. Fairhead. 22. Ayr. 23. Cork. 24. Wrath. 25. Clear. 26. Skye. 27. Wharf. 28. Wells. 29. Eden. 30. Camel.

No. 2.

F	A	L			
W	W	A	I	T	
L	A	N	N	E	L
I	N	E	N		
T	E	N			
L					

No. 3.

A looking-glass.
Dunkirk.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from Lida West, Johnny Few, Mamie Eccleston, Rose Fairweather, James Todd, Margaret Willis, Jack Thompson, Little Fidget, R. C. D., Anthony Dow, and Leonie Jerome.

[For Exchanges, see 2d and 3d pages of cover.]

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CONTRASTS.

BY G. B. BARTLETT,

AUTHOR OF "NEW GAMES FOR PARLOR AND LAWN."

THE players are arranged in two rows, one each side of the fire-place, and any even number of persons can join, as each one must have an opponent directly opposite, who sits facing him. The occupants of the chairs next the fire-place act as leaders, and the one on the right begins the game by choosing some noun. This word is whispered to the next in line, who communicates with his neighbor in turn, until all on one side have heard it. He then requests the player at the other end of his line to begin by saying to the person opposite him, "My object is like —, because it is —; it is unlike it, because —," of course naming some other word, which he selects according to its resemblance to or difference from the noun chosen by his side.

For instance, the word to be compared may be a pie, and he may say, "It is like the moon, because it is round; it is unlike it, because it is good to eat." If the player opposite to the speaker fails to guess the word before the leader can count twenty, the next on the line above the propounder of the puzzle speaks in his turn: "It is like an old bachelor, because it is crusty; it is unlike him, because it is sweet." If this is not guessed, the next

in turn may say, "It is like a soldier, for it has quarters; it is unlike him, for it prefers a hot fire." The next may say, "It is like the sea, for it is full of curra(e)nts; it is unlike it, because it is still." One may compare it to a summer day, because it is hot. Another may say it is different from a summer day, because it represents many seasons. Great care must be taken to render these replies more or less difficult to understand, and yet truthful at the same time.

After a little practice the word will be easily guessed by even the youngest players; but no one must give an answer but the person to whom the remark was addressed, for if he thinks he has the correct reply it is for his advantage to keep his secret until his turn comes to guess, for the first guesser becomes the leader of his side. After a word has been correctly named the one who is first to guess it takes his place at the head of the line. It is now his turn to select the word for the side to guess which gave out the first word.

If a player gives a guess out of turn, he takes his place at the foot of the line, and turns his chair so that his back is toward the other players opposite, in which position he must remain until the word has been answered correctly by some one on his side. When the leaders are changed they take the places and chairs of the ones who succeed them. The game goes merrily on until each one has had an opportunity to act as leader.



THIS LITTLE PIG WENT TO MARKET;



THIS LITTLE PIG STAI'D HOME.



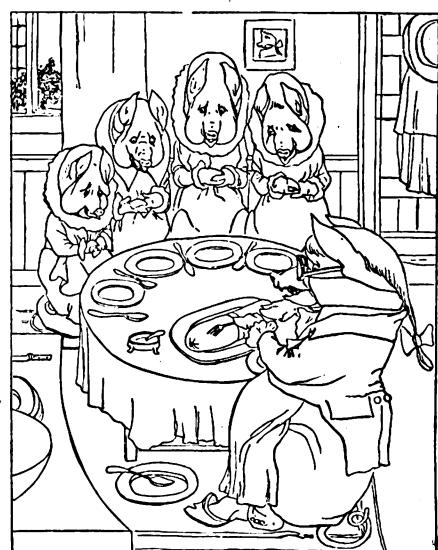
THIS LITTLE PIG HAD ROAST BEEF;



THIS LITTLE PIG HAD NONE.



THIS LITTLE PIG CRIED "WEE! WEE!"



ALL THE WAY HOME.

HARPER'S

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"WHAT A PRETTY LITTLE DEAR IT IS!" SAID CLAUS.—SEE STORY ON PAGE 82.

BOREAS BLUSTER'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

BY MRS. W. J. HAYS.

"Tis an ill wind that blows no good."

I.

IT had been a hard, cold, cruel winter, and one that just suited old Frozen Nose, the Storm King, whose palace of ice was on the north shore of the Polar Sea. He had ordered Rain, Hail, and Snow, his slaves, to accompany Lord Boreas Bluster on an invasion of the temperate zone, and when they had done his bidding he harnessed up his four-in-hand team of polar bears and went as far south as he dared, just to see how well they had obeyed him. How he roared with laughter when he found nearly all vegetation killed, and the earth wrapped in a white mantle as thick as his own bear-skins piled six feet deep! There was no nonsense about that sort of work.

"Catch any pert, saucy little flowers sticking up their heads through such a blanket!" said Frozen Nose to himself. "No, no; I've fixed 'em for a few years, anyhow. They're as dead as door-nails, and Spring with all her airs and graces will never bring them to life again. Ugh! how I hate 'em and all sweet smells! Wish I might never have anything but whale-oil on my hair and handkerchiefs for the rest of my life!"

"There's no fear but what you will, and stale at that," said the ugliest of his children, young Chilblain, giving his father's big toe a tweak as he passed, and grinning when he heard Frozen Nose grumble out:

"There's the gout again, I do believe!"

But Boreas Bluster, coming in just then, saw what was going on, and gave Chilblain a whack that sent him spinning out of the room.

To tell the truth, Boreas was not as hard-hearted as he looked. He was the most honest and straightforward of all Frozen Nose's friends. To be sure, he had to obey stern commands, and do many things that required a show of fierceness, but in the course of his travels he often yielded to a kind impulse, and restrained his fury when to indulge it would have pleased old Frozen Nose mightily.

This very day he had met with a strange adventure, which had been the occasion of a hasty return to the palace, and had so stirred his heart that the whack he gave young Chilblain was but the safety-valve to his feelings—a sort of letting off of steam which otherwise might have exploded and burst every block of ice in the realm.

In the many furious storms which had occurred of late Boreas had seen the destruction of numerous forests, and had even assisted in laying waste the country. But one night an avalanche had buried a hamlet from which only one living soul had escaped, and that was a young child—a mere sprig of a girl, with hair like the flax and eyes like its flowers, a little, timid, crying child—whom B. B. had actually taken in his arms and carried all the way out of the woods, over the mountains, and finally into Frozen Nose's own palace by the Polar Sea.

Never had such a thing happened before. Never had the tones of a child's voice pierced his dull ears, and made that big sledge-hammer of a heart positively ache with its throbs. It was a new and even a dangerous feeling; for though he made young Chilblain's impertinence the pretext of an outburst, he might just as readily have given a cuff to the hoary-headed Prime Minister, Sir Solomon Snow-Ball—and then there would have been a revolution. But happily for the peace of the Polar Sea palace, B. B. was satisfied with Chilblain's howl of rage, and in another moment had sunk down into his favorite armchair of twisted walrus tusks, and was lost in thought.

It was a curious scene, these three old men half asleep in their bear-skins, smoking long pipes of smouldering sea-weed. No fire danced on the hearth, no lamp shied its

lustre, but the moon's pale beams gleamed on the glittering walls and lit the ice-crystals with its silver rays. B. B.'s thoughts seemed to be of a troublesome nature, for he sighed heavily, almost creating a whirlwind, and at last, looking cautiously at his companions, and seeing they were asleep, he rose and went softly from the room. In the hall was a huge pile of furs, among which B. B. gently pushed until he found the object of his search, which, lifting carefully, he bound about him with thongs of reindeer hide. Then pulling on his immense snow-shoes, and drawing his cap closely about his ears, he went out into the night.

B. B. was aware that it would be impossible for him to keep his little Flax-Flower any longer in Frozen Nose's dominions: indeed, he had only hidden her in the hall until he could decide what course to pursue, for he knew only too well that Chilblain, in seeking revenge, would be sure to discover his secret, and do all he could to injure him. Personally, he had little to fear, but the punishment for mortals entering Frozen Nose's realm was death, and Flax-Flower was mortal.

With the speed for which he was so celebrated, Boreas slid over the ground in a southerly direction, never stopping until he had come upon what seemed to be a river which led down to a dark forest of pine-trees.

He was now at least three thousand miles from the Storm King's palace, and could afford to rest. Wiping his brow, and panting still with his recent efforts, Boreas drew a corner of the bundle of furs away from the face of Flax-Flower, and looked at the sleeping child. As he did so a thrill of tenderness made him long to kiss her, but he knew that his rough caress would chill her with fear. So, softly wrapping her up again, he plunged into the pine forest. Stopping again when in the middle of it, he gave a shrill whistle, which was responded to by one fainter and farther away, and presently a dwarf in the garb of an Esquimau emerged from the dusky gloom, and bending low, said,

"What will you, my master?"

"I would see thy lord, the good Saint Nicholas—the Storm King's enemy. Is he at home?"

"He is at home, but he is no man's enemy. What message shall I bear him?"

"Tell him that Boreas, of the Frozen Noses, awaits him." The dwarf vanished, and returned.

"My lord bids thee enter, but entreats thee to be gentle, and remember the manners of his court."

"That was a needless charge, considering my errand. Never has my mood been more peaceful. But it strikes me as passing strange thus to dictate terms to one of my station," responded Boreas, proudly.

"Pardon," answered the dwarf, "but we are no sticklers for ceremony, and recognize no rank save goodness. Follow me if it be thy wish to enter."

Pushing aside the heavy boughs on which the snow lay in icy masses that rattled and clashed like bolts and bars, he uncovered a low arched opening into what seemed a vast snow-bank. Through this tunnel he and Boreas made their way to a broad court which was as airy as a soap-bubble, round in shape, with pillars and dome of glass, through which streamed rays of light softer than sunshine and brighter than moonbeams.

From this court a broad, low stairway led to another apartment, which was as free from any show or splendor as the kitchen of a farm-house, and, indeed, in its suggestion of homely comfort and hospitality it was not unlike that cheery place. A Saxon motto, meaning "Welcome to those who hunger," was carved in the wooden frame of the fire-place. The floor was sanded, the tables and chairs were of oak, blackened by age, as were also the timbers of the ceiling, and cut and carved with curious devices.

On a big settle by the fire sat an old man, whose twinkling eyes could but just see through the shaggy and snowy

brows which overhung them, and whose white beard fell in a flowing mass upon his breast. What could be seen of his face bore a kind expression.

"Ho, ho, old Bluster!" he cried, in a clear and merry voice, drawing up and around him the sheep-skin mantle which was beside him, "what new freak is this of yours to enter our peaceful dwelling? Methought you were so sworn to do the Storm King's bidding that no power other than his rough sway could compel your presence. Come you on your own account or on his? Be it either, you are free to partake of our bounty. Ho, there, Merrythought! heave on more logs, and heat the poker, that we may thrust it fizzing into our tankards: 'tis always bitter cold when Boreas is abroad."

The dwarf skipped quickly to his task, assisted by a dozen others, and Boreas, unstrapping his bundle, drew little Flax-Flower, still sleeping, from the furs.

"Mine is a strange errand, good Claus—so strange, that I hardly know myself to be myself. Rough and stormy as I am ever, a child's misery has made me for once gentle. You know my mad career, my furious passions, and that they indeed are the strength of Storm King's realm. Too well I knew that I should be but the sport of mocking derision if I appealed to his mercy in behalf of this suffering child. Mercy, did I say? He knows none. Death alone could have met this little creature, whose cries have aroused within me the deepest feelings I have ever known. To be honest, I have not always been the fierce being I appear. Many and many a time, unknown to you, I have followed you on your errands of love and pity, and watched with admiration the course you have pursued. This has induced me now to come and ask your favor for my treasure. Wake, little Flax-Flower, wake!" he continued, gently kissing the child's eyes, who, so stirred, rubbed her sleepy lids with rosy little fists, and looked around in astonishment.

"Ha!" said the good St. Nicholas; "this is indeed a strange story for you to tell, friend Bluster. Ho, there, Merrythought! send for Mrs. Christmas, my housekeeper. The child may be frightened at our grim faces. But what a pretty little dear it is!" said Claus, in the kindest tones, putting out his big fat hand to caress her. To Boreas's surprise Flax-Flower did not shrink from his salute, but with a bright smile bounded into the old man's arms and kissed him.

Turning away with a pang of jealousy, Boreas muttered, "She wouldn't kiss *me*; but no matter. That settles it. She's in the right place, and I'll leave her. Farewell, Claus; I'm off. No, no; I've no time for eating and drinking. Frozen Nose will be thundering at my absence already. There's a storm brewing even now; I feel it in my bones." So saying, he tramped noisily out of the apartment, nearly knocking over a fleshy dame in ruffled cap and whitest apron, whose rosy cheeks were like winter apples, and who bore in her hands a huge mince-pie in which was stuck a sprig of mistletoe.

II.

"Come, mother, cease thy spinning, and look at the lovely tree that Olaf has brought thee; it stands as straight as himself in the best room. Surely thou wilt deck it to please him."

"Ah, Fritz! how can I?" said the forester's wife, rising from her wheel, with a sad but sweet smile, in obedience to her husband's wishes.

"But there is surely no reason for longer indulging thy grief. Our child is too happy in heaven to wish her return to earth, and whatever the good God sends of pleasure or innocent mirth we should take with thankfulness. Look at the tree; it is the very image of Olaf's own strong youth. Make it pretty to-night, and he will be glad. A good friend is he for two lonely beings like us to possess."

"You are right, Fritz," said the wife, wiping a tear from her eyes. "For Olaf's sake I will dress the tree and bake a cake." So saying, she tidied up her best parlor, and took from a brass-bound chest the gay ribbons and trinkets which had not been used since the Christmas-eve her little one last spent on earth.

Very lonely and sad would these two people have been but for Olaf, the son of their nearest neighbor. It was he whose clear ringing voice might be heard in the forest when returning from his work, and Fritz said that it made labor light but to hear him. It was he, too, who, when Fritz had been lamed by the fall of a tree, had borne him home on his strong young shoulders; so it was no wonder that the good wife was grateful to him. Often at evening he made their fire-side bright with his songs and merry stories, and now it was but just that they should shake off their sorrow for his sake; so the good wife drew out her spotless board, and kneaded spice-cakes, and spread her best damask, and set out the fine china.

"Ah, if I had my little one!" murmured the good woman. "But God knows best," she quickly added, as she remembered many blessings.

"Here comes Olaf!" shouted Fritz from below. "Come quickly, lest he think thee tardy."

"Yes, yes, I come. I see him," was her reply. "But what is that he carries?—something he has picked up on the way?"

"A Christmas gift for thee," was the merry answer from Olaf's ringing voice, as he laid a strange bundle in her arms.

III. -

Little Flax-Flower had been with St. Nicholas a whole long week. In that time she had been in every nook and corner of his dwelling. She had seen all his elves and dwarfs at work manufacturing every known toy to be found in the world. She had watched the dolls' dress-makers; she had ridden the toy horses; she had blown the brass bugles and beaten the drums until Mrs. Christmas had to put cotton in her ears.

Now all this was very delightful, and made Santa Claus laugh long and loud. He would not have cared if she had brought the house down on his ears, so long as she had a bright smile and a kiss for him. But when Boreas Bluster stopped to see how his young ward was getting on, he shook his head gravely, and told Mrs. Christmas he feared she was spoiling Flax-Flower. But Mrs. Christmas laughed just in the same manner that Santa Claus had done, and declared that the child must have all she wanted.

Unfortunately Flax-Flower went into the kitchen one day, and finding all the cooks busily making sugar-plums, helped herself so largely to taffy that she was made very ill; she ate, besides, quite a menagerie of lemon-candy elephants, camels, and kangaroos, which disagreed with themselves and with her; so that her head ached, and she had to be put to bed, with a hot-water bottle and a mustard draught for companions. This happened just as Boreas had stopped in to inquire about his pet, and he shook his head gravely when Mrs. Christmas related the incident. But Santa Claus only laughed till the air seemed full of merriment.

"Ah, my dear Claus, I see you have too easy and gentle a nature to deal with willful little mortals in an every-day way; besides, you have to think of so many that it unfits you for the care of a single one," said Boreas, in his least gruff manner. "I shall have to find another home for Flax-Flower."

"Well," replied St. Nicholas, "I confess I can refuse nothing to a good child. Children to me are all like so many empty stockings—made to be filled. But I have had some doubts about keeping Flax-Flower. Mrs. Christmas and I are afraid it will make the others jealous; it is that, and not the stuffing down lollipops, that makes me



"SHE ATE, BESIDES, QUITE A MENAGERIE."

think you are right. Now her feast-day comes soon—I mean Mrs. Christmas's day," said Santa Claus, with a nod—"and if you will just give my sleigh a lift, I think I can tuck in Flaxie and carry her to some people I know—some people who will appreciate her and be kind to her; yes, and even cross in a wholesome way, seeing that's what you approve of."

Here Santa pretended to be very gruff himself, but Boreas saw through it. He knew that St. Nicholas, on the whole, believed that Flaxie would be better off without so much amusement and without so many temptations to do nothing but play all day long, and this was the way the matter ended.

Just before Christmas-day Santa Claus's sleigh was brought out into the beautiful court I have described; eight lively young reindeer were harnessed to it, and thousands of toys were packed in it; furs were wrapped around Flaxie, who was now quite well, and Mrs. Christmas herself made up a box of delicacies for her to eat on the way.

"Think of us often, dear child," she whispered, "and give my love to everybody."

Then the dwarfs gave the sleigh a push from behind, the bells of the harness rang out a merry peal, the reindeer pranced, Santa Claus snapped his whip, and away they flew, with Boreas behind them on his snow-shoes.

"Now, Flaxie," said Santa Claus, after they had skimmed over the snow with lightning speed for hours, "before you go to sleep, as I see you are doing, I want to speak to you. I want you always to remember this visit to my house with pleasure, and tell all the children you may meet how much I love them, how much it pleases me to know that they are good, and how it really distresses me when they are not; tell them, too, that as long as Mrs. Christmas lives we will do all we can for their happiness, and all we ask in return is a grateful spirit. Do you think you can remember all this? Well, as you say you can, tell them also to hang up an extra stocking, whenever there is room by the chimney, for some little waif that hasn't a stocking to hang up for himself. Now go to sleep as soon as you please, and may your dreams be sweet!"

Cuddled down in the comfortable furs, Flaxie knew nothing more till she found herself awake and in the arms of a tall young fellow, whose name was Olaf, and who carried her into the brightest, nicest little parlor, and set her down in front of a fine Christmas tree, saying:

"There, Mistress Kindheart, see what Christmas has brought you. I found her in the forest, and a great bearded giant told me to bring her to you."

"Oh, Olaf, it is my little Lena come back, I do believe!" cried the woman, while tears of joy ran down her face.

"Nay, mother, nay," said her husband; "but she shall take our lost one's place.—Come, little one, tell us who thou art, and from whence thou art come."

Then Flaxie told the story of her visit to St. Nicholas, while Olaf, Fritz, and his wife listened in amazement.

Much as Flax-Flower had enjoyed all she had seen and done, it was delightful to be again with people of her own flesh and blood, and learn to say the sweet word "Mother."

That Christmas was a merry one, but no merrier than the many which came after, for Flax-Flower became a dutiful daughter to the kind people who gave her a home. She and Olaf were like sister and brother to each other, and they were known throughout all the country-side for their kindness to the poor and unfortunate, especially at Christmas-time.

Frozen Nose still reigns in his palace on the polar sea, and it is mainly owing to him and his wicked son Chilblain that nothing more is known of that still unexplored region; but Boreas Bluster spends much of his time with good St. Nicholas and Mrs. Christmas. He tires of the severity of his life, and likes a snug corner where he can relate the story of his finding Flax-Flower, whom he still loves very tenderly. Often on an evening he ventures down to take a peep at her in her happy home, and little does she suspect that the cooling breeze at the close of a warm day is Boreas's gift of thoughtful kindness.

THE LOST CITY;*
OR, THE BOY EXPLORERS IN CENTRAL ASIA.
BY DAVID KER.

CHAPTER IX.—(*Continued.*)

LOST ON THE MOUNTAINS.

IT was, indeed, as Tom Hilton had said, "out of the frying-pan into the fire"; but the daring young American was not easily disheartened. Profiting by his experience in the Ameer's garden, he lowered himself into a deep trench scooped by the torrent which had once poured through the cleft by which they had descended, and crawled along it until he reached the tents, closely followed by his comrade.

Finding all quiet, the boys cautiously left the trench, and keeping well in the shadow, proceeded to help themselves. Tom seized a goat-skin bag full of wheaten bread and dried fruit, while Ernest Clairmont slung over his shoulder a half-devoured joint of goat. The latter then clutched a gun that lay beside a slumbering warrior, while Tom Hilton, seeing a splendid rifle hanging with its ammunition pouch across the door of the nearest tent, crept up and seized it.

In doing so, however, he came within the circle of light cast by the fire, and the sentinel's eye was instantly upon him. The native mantle might have disarmed suspicion, but his fair skin betrayed him at once. Uttering a hoarse cry of rage, the Afghan levelled his rifle. But just then something glittered behind him, and with one convulsive spring he fell heavily upon his face, his gun going off harmlessly in the fall.

The next moment came a yell that awoke all the echoes of the silent mountains, and out of the darkness broke a wave of fierce faces and glittering weapons, sweeping right down into the camp. Then rose on high a wild clamor of rage and alarm, as the half-awakened sleepers sprang up and seized whatever weapon came first to hand. In a moment the whole camp was in one whirl of hand-to-hand battle, blows raining at hap-hazard amid the darkness, pistols and rifles flashing through the gloom like summer lightnings, and death coming no one knew whence or how.

Meanwhile the boys, unnoticed in the confusion, had got clear of the camp, and were scrambling across the river-bed beyond it, in which the long drought had left only a tiny stream trickling through the centre of a wide waste of sand and gravel. But along the farther bank stretched a belt of thick, wiry scrub, dense enough to screen them from every eye; and they were hurrying toward it when a terrific clamor from behind told them that the beaten Afghans were fleeing in the same direction, while their pursuers, following close at their heels, were cutting down man after man.

There was no time to lose. The boys dashed through the water and over the pebbles, and had just gained the top of the bank, when a deep booming sound shook the air, followed by a deafening crash, and an inky-black torrent came rushing and roaring down the dry channel, sweeping away like leaves the whole crowd of combatants, whose livid faces stood out spectrally in the rising moonlight for one moment before the swirling foam closed over them.

"Poor fellows!" said Ernest; "I wish we could save some of them. Thank God it didn't come a minute sooner! Ha! what's that?"

It was a solitary horseman, struggling in mid-stream. A high gravel bank had saved him for the moment, but it was fast giving way, and another instant must seal his doom. Just then a ray of moonlight struck full upon his face, and the boys recognized Sikander!

CHAPTER X.

SIKANDER'S NEWS.

"TURN round!" roared Tom Hilton, recovering from his momentary stupor. "The rock! the rock!"

The brave Afghan, cool as ever in that deadly peril, heard and understood. One rapid glance over his shoulder, and then, just as the gravel gave way beneath him, he turned his horse's head and set it straight at a huge sloping boulder, nearly six feet broad by as many high at the upper end, which lay a little behind him. The swirl of the current was tremendous, and horse and rider almost disappeared in the boiling foam; but they rose again instantly, and another moment saw them safe upon the rock.

By this time the fury of the flood was beginning to subside. No longer pent up between the cliffs whence it had issued, it had spread itself over so wide a space as to lose much of its force and volume. In the softer soil near the camp it had already ploughed a deep channel, through which it was rushing so fiercely that Sikander had evidently no chance of crossing *there*. But the farther



bank, high, shelving, and stony, soon shallowed the stream on that side so much that Sikander, having given his spent horse time to rest and breathe, found little difficulty in reaching the spot where the boys were standing.

A cordial greeting passed between the three friends so strangely reunited, and our heroes hastened to offer Sikander a share of their provisions, which they had not yet found leisure to touch. The Afghan, who was quite as hungry as themselves, readily assented; and there, in the heart of the lonely mountains, with the cold moon looking down upon them, and the rushing torrent at their feet, the three wanderers made a hearty meal.

"Noble Aghas" (gentlemen), said Sikander, when they had finished, "since God, the all-merciful, hath brought us together once more, let us not linger here. Such of my poor lads as the flood has spared must be far away by this time, and the river will be impassable on that side for at least three days to come. Hear me! They who feed their flocks beyond these hills are my friends and brothers; wherefore let us hasten to sit under the shadow of their tents. My horse will bear ye both with ease, and I will lead him by the bridle."

But the boys objecting to this, it was agreed that they should ride by turns, and away they went.

On the way Sikander told them sundry pieces of news which considerably astonished them. They now learned for the first time that Cabool was again occupied by the British, the Ameer a prisoner in their hands, and Cavaignari's murder being avenged by numerous executions. From these events he turned to others that interested them even more. Immediately on learning that they were still alive (which he heard from one of his own men, who had seen them borne off by Ahmed Khan's band) he had gathered his warriors and started in pursuit, accompanied by Colonel Hilton. The Colonel, however, had been struck down at the very outset by a fever resulting from overfatigue and distress of mind, and was now lying in the British lines near Cabool—"watched night and day," added Sikander, "by my old comrade, the English soldier whom you call Bill."

"What? isn't he dead, after all?" cried Ernest, when this was translated to him. "Hurrah for old Bill!"

Sikander proceeded to relate how he had found Ahmed Khan's stronghold occupied by a Goorkha detachment, the English leader of which, in reply to his questions, had produced the written message left there by Tom. Sikander had set off at once in the direction indicated, but he had followed by mistake the trail of another party of the same tribe—an error resulting in the night attack which had come so opportunely to save our two heroes.

"And Professor Makaroff?—do you know anything of him?"

"He who sought the Lost City? Evil has come to him, as to all who seek *it*. On our march we met one of the Afghan hunters who were with him, and he told us that the Cabool guide led them astray among the hills of the Bolor-Dagh" (the range bordering Afghanistan on the northeast), "where the men of the mountain fell upon them and slew many of them, and scattered the rest; but whether the Russian himself were living or dead, he could not say."

"I'll be bound that Persian rogue, Kara-Goorg, had a hand in that, as he has in everything that's bad," growled Tom.

"Kara-Goorg? The day after the fight he went to the Russian Ambassador, and said he had paid some men to take you away and keep you safe until all was quiet again, but that the Afghans had taken you from them by force; and the Ambassador gave him great praise, and sent him on a mission to some of the chiefs of the north. Perchance I may meet him there, and *then*—" A clutch of his sword hilt completed the sentence.

Day was just breaking when they turned the corner of

a huge cliff, and saw before them a fortress, similar to that of Ahmed Khan, standing in the midst of a green valley. The boys were surprised to see so many sheep feeding around the wall; but they afterward learned that the mountain Afghans preserve their sheep for the sake of their milk, and live on goat's flesh instead of mutton.

Several figures were already moving about, and Sikander hailed them with a peculiar cry, which was instantly answered. A few moments later the Afghan was being warmly greeted by his old friends, while Tom and Ernest, who, now that all danger was over, could hardly keep their eyes open from fatigue, were led away into the fort, and made as comfortable as its resources permitted.

Tom's first thought on waking was to communicate with his father as quickly as possible. With a sheet of white bark, and a soft red stone ground into a point, he managed to write a few lines, which Sikander sent off at once by one of the tribe disguised as a pilgrim, with the assurance of a large reward if he delivered it safely.

And now for the next four or five days our heroes enjoyed a perfect holiday after all their troubles. They learned to drink ewe milk, which they thought a little too sweet just at first, and to eat goat's flesh, which inspired Ernest with a joke about "Billygoatawney soup." They studied Afghan cookery, and even practiced it in the queer little native ovens, which consist merely of a hole scooped in the earth, and sheltered from the wind by two or three piled-up stones.

When evening came, Tom's recital of his adventures eclipsed every other *kessehgou* (story-teller) in the camp, the mountaineers being in raptures at the defeat of their enemies, and the way in which the boys had outwitted and escaped them. Finally both lads made such brilliant scores in a shooting match that the old chief himself complimented them by saying that their father must be a famous robber to have trained them so well.

This characteristic praise was aptly followed by the ceremony which they witnessed that evening. A warrior led up his infant son, who was just old enough to run alone, to a hovel, in the clay wall of which a small hole had been cut. Through this hole the father made his child creep to and fro, while the by-standers shouted in full chorus, "Ghal shah!" (be a thief).

"I suppose that's the Afghan way of saying, 'Be a good boy,'" said Tom to Ernest, as they stood watching. "Fancy some careful American father apprenticing his son to a thief, and commanding him to be faithful and industrious, and do credit to his profession!"

"It is a queer country, certainly," answered Ernest, "where a thief's held in honor, and a laboring-man looked down upon as a disgrace to his family. It just reminds me of that old fellow in Homer who thought Telemachus such a fine gentlemanly looking man that he must be a pirate."

The next morning in came Sikander's raiders, who had at length succeeded in crossing the swollen river in quest of their missing chief. Their coming was the signal for a grand feast, after which Sikander announced that as one day would suffice to rest the party, they might all start for Cabool on the second morning following.

Here, then, our heroes' adventures might have ended, this strong escort being an ample security against every danger. But in an evil hour they recollect that they had not yet tried their skill upon the wild goats of the surrounding hills; and such a chance of tracking down the shyest game in Afghanistan, and requiting the kindness of their hosts by providing them with some fresh meat, was too good to be lost.

"When once we get back," said Tom Hilton, "there'll be an end of our adventures, so we may just as well have one more before starting."

That "one more" did it all.

FOR GRANDMAMMA.

BY MARY A. BARR.

"OH, Willie, whisper soft and low,
And sit close to me, dear;
We've got a secret sweet, you know,
That Grandma must not hear.

"We'll count our dollars, you and I
(I'm sure you will not mind),
And then for Grandmamma we'll buy
The grandest thing we find.

"I think 'twould be a splendid thing
To buy for Grandma's hand
A darling lovely diamond ring,
The brightest in the land."

"No, Sis, we'll buy a watch of gold,
One that ticks clear and loud;
I'll go with you—I'm strong and bold,
And do not fear a crowd."

They counted out their little store,
Each penny that they had,
And talked their plans all o'er and o'er,
This little girl and lad;
While Grandmamma, unseen, unheard,
Sat smiling, with head bowed,
Listening to every loving word;
And though she spoke not loud,
She blessed them both, so glad and proud.

SANTA CLAUS.

BY JIMMY BROWN.

WHAT on earth do you think has happened? The other day I was at Tom McGinnis's house, and he had some company. He was a big boy, and something like a cousin of Tom's. Would you believe it, that fellow said there wasn't any Santa Claus? I was ashamed for him, and I told him at once that he could never have any little hatchet.

Now that boy distinctly did tell—but I won't mention it. We should never reveal the wickedness of other people, and ought always to be thankful that we are worse than anybody else. Otherwise we should be like the Pharisee, and he was very bad. I knew for certain that it was a fib Tom McGinnis's cousin told. But all the same, the more I thought about it the more I got worried.

If there is a Santa Claus—and of course there is—how could he get up on the top of the house, so he could come down the chimney, unless he carried a big ladder with him; and if he did this, how could he carry presents enough to fill mornahundred stockings? And then how could he help getting the things all over soot from the chimney, and how does he manage when the chimney is all full of smoke and fire, as it always is at Christmas? But then, as the preacher says, he may be supernatural—I had to look that word up in the dictionary.

The story Tom McGinnis's cousin told kept on worrying me, and finally I began to think how perfectly awful it would be if there was any truth in it. How the children would feel! There's going to be no end of children at our house this Christmas, and Aunt Eliza and her two small boys are here already. I heard mother and Aunt Eliza talking about Christmas the other day, and they agreed that all the children should sleep on cot bedsteads in the back parlor, so that they could open their stockings together, and mother said, "You know, Eliza, there's a big fire-place in that room, and the children can hang their stockings around the chimney." ✓

Now I know I did wrong, but it was only because I did not want the children to be disappointed. We should always do to others and so on, and I know I should have been grateful if anybody had tried to get up a Santa Claus for me in case of the real one being out of repair. Neither do I blame mother, though if she hadn't spoken about the fire-place in the way she did, it would never have happen-

ed. But I do think that they ought to have made a little allowance for me, since I was only trying to help make the Christmas business successful.

It all happened yesterday. Tom McGinnis had come to see me, and all the folks had gone out to ride except Aunt Eliza's little boy Harry. We were talking about Christmas, and I was telling Tom how all the children were to sleep in the back parlor, and how there was a chimney there that was just the thing for Santa Claus. We went and looked at the chimney, and then I said to Tom what fun it would be to dress up and come down the chimney and pretend to be Santa Claus, and how it would amuse the children, and how pleased the grown-up folks would be, for they are always wanting us to amuse them.

Tom agreed with me that it would be splendid fun, and said we ought to practice coming down the chimney, so that we could do it easily on Christmas-eve. He said he thought I ought to do it, because it was our house; but I said no, he was a visitor, and it would be mean and selfish in me to deprive him of any pleasure. But Tom wouldn't do it. He said that he wasn't feeling very well, and that he didn't like to take liberties with our chimney, and, besides, he was afraid that he was so big that he wouldn't fit the chimney. Then we thought of Harry, and agreed that he was just the right size. Of course Harry said he'd do it when we asked him, for he isn't afraid of anything, and is so proud to be allowed to play with Tom and me that he would do anything we asked him to do.

Well, Harry took off his coat and shoes, and we all went up to the roof, and Tom and I boosted Harry till he got on the top of the chimney and put his legs in it and slid down. He went down like a flash, for he didn't know enough to brace himself the way the chimney-sweeps do. Tom and I we hurried down to the back parlor to meet him; but he had not arrived yet, though the fire-place was full of ashes and soot.

We supposed he had stopped on the way to rest; but after a while we thought we heard a noise, like somebody calling, that was a great way off. We went up on the roof, thinking Harry might have climbed back up the chimney, but he wasn't there. When we got on the top of the chimney we could hear him plain enough. He was crying and yelling for help, for he was stuck about half-way down the chimney, and couldn't get either up or down.

We talked it over for some time, and decided that the best thing to do was to get a rope and let it down to him, and pull him out. So I got the clothes-line and let it down, but Harry's arms were jammed close to his sides, so he couldn't get hold of it. Tom said we ought to make a slippernoose, catch it over Harry's head, and pull him out that way, but I knew that Harry wasn't very strong, and I was afraid if we did that he might come apart.

Then I proposed that we should get a long pole and push Harry down the rest of the chimney, but after hunting all over the yard we couldn't find a pole that was long enough, so we had to give that plan up. All this time Harry was crying in the most discontented way, although we were doing all we could for him. That's the way with little boys. They never have any gratitude, and are always discontented.

As we couldn't poke Harry down, Tom said let's try to poke him up. So we told Harry to be patient and considerate, and we went down-stairs again, and took the longest pole we could find and pushed it up the chimney. Bushels of soot came down, and flew over everything, but we couldn't reach Harry with the pole. By this time we began to feel discouraged. We were awfully sorry for Harry, because, if we couldn't get him out before the folks came home, Tom and I would be in a dreadful scrape.

Then I thought that if we were to build a little fire the draught might draw Harry out. Tom thought it was an excellent plan. So I started a fire, but it didn't loosen Harry a bit, and when we went on the roof to meet him



"THEY GOT HARRY OUT ALL SAFE."

we heard him crying louder than ever, and saying that something was on fire in the chimney and was choking him. I knew what to do, though Tom didn't, and, to tell the truth, he was terribly frightened.

We ran down and got two pails of water, and poured them down the chimney. That put the fire out, but you would hardly believe that Harry was more unreasonable than ever, and said we were trying to drown him. There is no comfort in wearing yourself out in trying to please little boys. You can't satisfy them, no matter how much trouble you take, and for my part I am tired of trying to please Harry, and shall let him amuse himself the rest of the time he is at our house.

We had tried every plan we could think of to get Harry out of the chimney, but none of them succeeded. Tom said that if we were to pour a whole lot of oil down the chimney it would make it so slippery that Harry would slide right down into the back parlor, but I wouldn't do it, because I knew the oil would spoil Harry's clothes, and that would make Aunt Eliza angry. All of a sudden I heard a carriage stop at our gate, and there were the grown folks, who had come home earlier than I had supposed they would. Tom said that he thought he would go home before his own folks began to get uneasy about him, so he went out of the back gate, and left me to explain things. They had to send for some men to come and cut a hole through the wall. But they got Harry out all safe; and after they found that he wasn't a bit hurt, instead of thank-

ing me for all Tom and I had done for him, they seemed to think that I deserved the worst punishment I ever had, and I got it.

• And I shall never make another attempt to amuse children on Christmas-eve.

BABY WHALES.

BY ARTHUR LINDSLEY.

A WAY "on the Northwest" you will need to go if you expect to find the scene which is shown in the picture on page 89. Old and young whales you may see, it is true, in many parts of the ocean, and without going to any great distance. Right along our own coast here whales are cruising in greater or less numbers at all seasons, and you may remember that in April of last year YOUNG PEOPLE had an article on whales and their capture, the drawings for which were made from a specimen just killed on the south shore of Long Island. But it was no such whale as this. That whale was of the species commonly found throughout the middle regions of the North Atlantic, which never grows to a very great size (meaning great size for a whale), one which makes fifty barrels of oil being larger than common. The whale shown in the drawing, however, is a "steeple-top" or "bow-head," and lives, as I have said, "on the Northwest," never coming down to as low latitudes as this, and seldom reaching 55° or even 60° N.

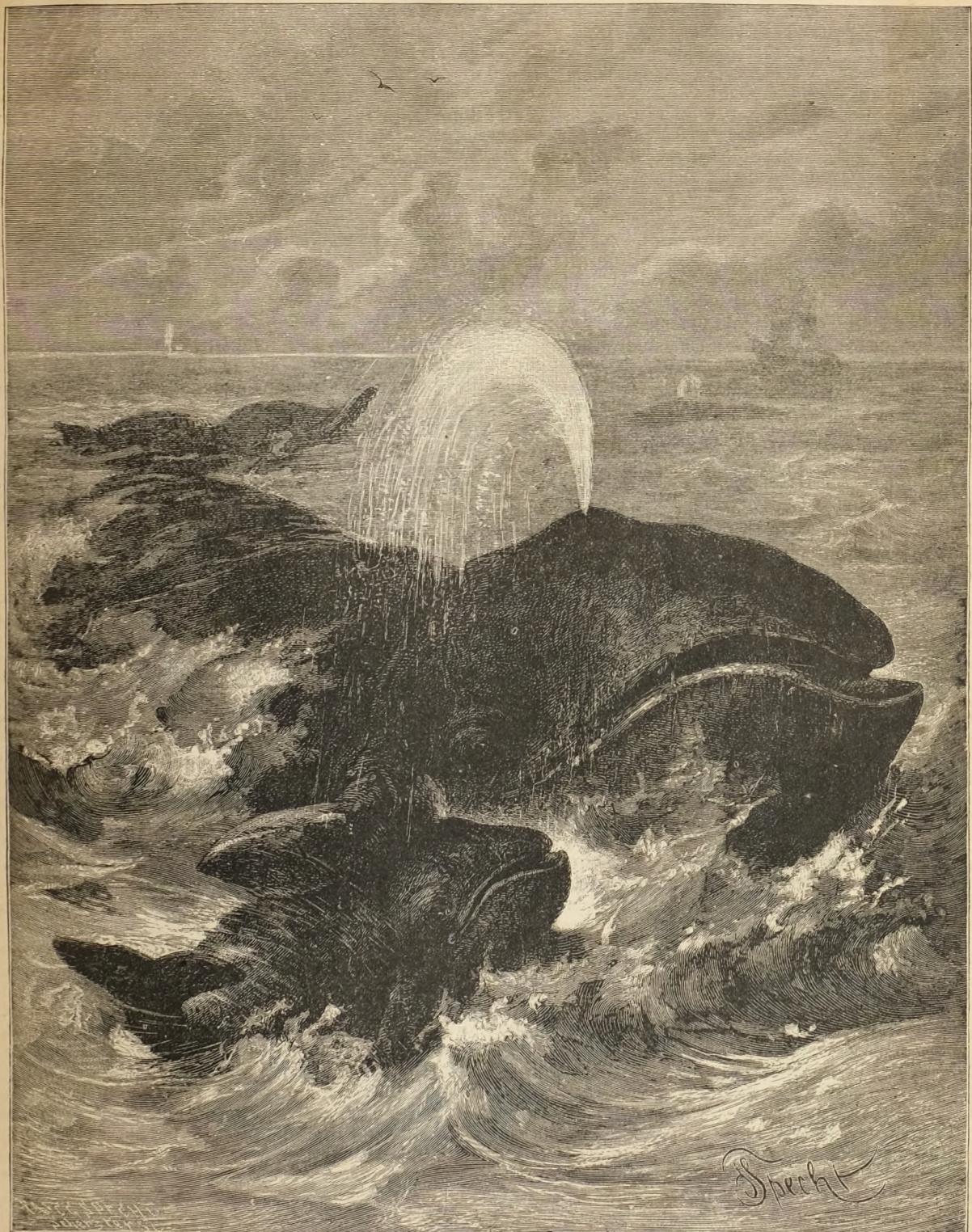
And it is a huge and mighty beast as well, for when our whalers first reached that distant whaling ground many a steeple-top was killed by them that yielded 250 barrels of oil, and some which turned out full 300. And while a slab of whale-bone four feet in length from the species of our coast is of a very fair size, I have

seen steeple-top "bone" which measured fully fifteen feet, and I saw at one time, in a single lot, many thousands of pounds, not a single slab of which was less than twelve feet long, and they ran from that to fourteen.

I have called them Northwest whales, meaning by "Northwest" the waters of the extreme North Pacific, and so on through into the Arctic Ocean. It was in this region that our people hunted them for so many years, until they were compelled to abandon the fishing because they had almost destroyed them all. But it is probable that the "steeple-top" and "bow-head" and "right whale" of Greenland are all of one species in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

But we started to talk about the babies: let us go back and look at the drawing. Very contented that little fellow seems to be, does he not? And why he should not be I can not tell. His mother is holding him in her arms just as your mother held you when you were a baby. Maybe you think your mother had a more comfortable couch or chair or place on which to rest than is shown here, but I doubt if she found it a bit more enjoyable.

This mother has rolled over on her side, put her upper arm over her baby (the lower one is under water, and you can not see it), and apparently they have both of them gone fast asleep. The cradle is large enough for both, and it rocks smoothly and easily, for the long roll of the Pacific is swinging them to and fro to their perfect contentment. See how it washes up along the mother's sides and throat,



"ROCKING THE 'BABY.'"

and over the baby's back. Perhaps it seems to you a dreary place and way to live, and so doubtless it would be for you, but, you see, you have never been a whale, and were not designed to be.

They are fitted for it, and they swing and rock in their cradle to their full enjoyment, as much as you did in yours. But alas! their cradle is not always a safe one, easy as it is. They may, perhaps, be wakened from their sleep unexpectedly and roughly. Men hunt whales, you

know, and kill them for the sake of their oil, and this old mother shows so plainly what an immense number of barrels she could turn out that you may be sure the sight of her would fill a whaler's heart with joy, and his boats would be lowered at once to make sure of her. Before I sat down to write this article I showed this drawing to an old whaling Captain, and it raised his interest wonderfully at once.

"Well! well! well! That fellow has been on the North-

west, sure. No use talking. He never could draw no such an old cow and calf as them 'less he had seen 'em. There! do you see that? That is what that picture means to me." He had taken off his coat, and rolled up his sleeve almost to the shoulder, and as he spoke he held out his arm to me for my examination. I could see at a glance that above the elbow he had been injured dreadfully. The arm had been broken in at least three parts, and in healing the pieces had not been set so skillfully but that the limb was deformed, and showed the places of fracture.

"There! that is what I got for interfering in just such a thing as that, and served me right, too. I had no business to have done it; ought to have known better; ought to have known how the critter would fight. But then you know how whalers take all sorts of chances. Come, I reckon I'd better tell you the story. It won't do you no harm, anyhow."

"All right, Captain; go ahead. I will risk the danger."

"Danger! Maybe you would not have liked to risk the danger I was in, and the licks I got with it. But never mind: here's the yarn. You see, I was in the old *Betsy Morgan*. 'Twas in '52. I was first mate of her, and I came mighty nigh never being anything more than mate, or ever making another voyage, anyway. If any fellow ever was close on going to kingdom come and did not get there, that fellow was in the bow of my boat that day, and his name was Jim Perkins.

"We had worked well over to the westward, and were close in on the Kamtchatka side, in about 56° N. There had been a thick fog all that morning, and when it lighted up just before noon there lay a large whale, perfectly quiet, not two cables' lengths from us. It did not want any glass to show us that it was a cow and her calf.

"Of course no noise was made: every man was afraid to speak above his breath. The Captain was a slow-going sort of fellow, but he hurried up to me, whispering as though the whale was right there, 'Mr. Perkins, what do you think?' I had made up my mind before he spoke; I was just going to start. 'Captain Green, we can get her. She is sound asleep. Lower your boat. I will have mine down, and I believe we can *paddle* up to her and get an iron in before she is awake.' The old man laughed; he had known me ever since I was a boy. 'Jim, if you are going to harpoon a whale while she is asleep, don't trust no boat-steerer at the work: do it yourself.'

"Our boats were down and we in them without a sound, and slowly the men paddled toward the whale. You know that in common whaling the boat-steerer pulls the bow-oar, lays in his oar as they come near, rises, and takes up the harpoon—or *iron*, as it is called—strikes the whale, and then changes places with the officer who has been steering, but who then comes forward, ready to use the lance.

"This time, as the Captain had said, I sent my boat-steerer aft, and took my post in the bow, with my iron in my hand, for we were already so near the whale. Captain Green allowed my boat to go ahead, for he told the crew afterward there was not another man in the ship he would have 'trusted to strike that whale but Mr. Perkins.' You need not suppose that I did not know the risk I was running. I saw that with that young calf the old one would fight most awfully, for it was plainly only a day or two old, and she would have to stay by it close. As my crew worked their way up I was studying what it was best to do, whether I should kill the calf first and then strike the cow, or whether I should put an iron into her first thing. As we were close upon them, and I saw how she lay, I made up my mind quick.

"If the man who drew that picture had stood by my side he could not have drawn any better what I saw. We were coming up just aft of that fin which she has over the calf. Right behind the fin, and forward of where that sea is washing up on her side, I could see where her 'life' lay,

and I knew that I could put my iron straight into it, and I knew that if I did that all the mischief she did afterward must be done mighty quick.

"My crew paddled up so still that our bow actually went between the fin and her body, but before the boat touched her my iron had gone to its mark. And the thing that really waked up that whale was the dart of my harpoon *through her heart*, for that was where we found it when she was cut up, or rather that is where *they* found it, for I did not, as you shall hear. Her plunge was ugly, but the men had shot the boat back as the iron went down, and we just cleared the sweep of her flukes, but not before I had thrown my second iron and killed the calf.

"All that followed was like a flash. I just heard the shout of the Captain, 'Look out, Jim'—the old man was too much excited to remember the 'Mr. Perkins' then. I saw the whale spout a solid stream of blood, and I knew that she was killed. But on the instant came the awful thrash of her flukes again, and my boat was stove, and every man of us afloat, and that was the last thing I knew for three days.

"That blow was the death-stroke. Captain Green told me when I was so that I could talk that after it the whale scarcely moved; he said he never saw a full-grown whale killed so right out-and-out in all his whaling. In fact, the way the first mate 'served out that old bow-head cow on Kamshat' was the boast of the crew through the whole voyage, and got me the command of my first ship.

"But, as I said, I knew nothing of it for a long time. When the fluke came down it not only crushed my arm—for you see in how many places it broke it—but it also hit my head so violently that the concussion of the brain was fearful. I have sometimes thought that I had instinctively thrown up my arm to defend my head, and that in that way I saved my life. I do not know.

"The three men nearest me were also stunned, and one of them had his wrist broken, but no one was killed. The forward part of the boat was smashed to pieces, or, as the Captain expressed it, 'there was not enough left to make a thole-pin.' But the whale made us one hundred and sixty-five barrels, and all the accidents went as part of the common experiences of whaling.

"Captain Green never could get tired of talking the affair over. Long after he had left the sea, and was quietly settled down at home, he never could see me but that he would begin upon it. The very last time I saw him—he was then seventy-four years old—was in a car on the Shore Line Railroad. He stopped me as I passed, and began, 'Captain Perkins, what is your private opinion of the prudence of harpooning a bow-head whale when she is asleep, with her baby in the cradle alongside?' And then he burst out with a laugh that fairly shook the car."

This was Captain Jim's story, told as a whaler would tell it. That he had a great deal of pride in the terrible stroke of his "iron," which took the old mother's life so suddenly, was manifest, and the idea of anything more than his common duty in killing the baby never occurred to him.

DEB'S "GIVE-AWAY."

BY MARY A. LATHBURY.

IT was two weeks before Christmas, and about nine o'clock in the morning, that the door of a pretty brown-stone house facing G—Park opened very suddenly, and two young girls appeared. They looked eagerly up and down the street, and then began an indescribable little hopping dance, partly to keep warm, and partly to express their delight at the appearance of the postman, who was just coming around the corner.

There was a rapid shuffling of the letters when they came, and then two little shrieks when a letter came to

the surface which bore upon its face a rather feeble groping after the "English hand" so dear to the girls who attended Miss Q—'s school.

The address, on being studied out, was apparently meant to read,

Important.

Miss Debbie Dunham,
124 E.th St.,
New York.

"Oh, I hope they've given in!" cried one of the girls, eagerly, while the letter was opened and the door shut at the same moment.

There was a jubilee in the breakfast-room, and this was the reason why: Seven cousins had met in this room the morning before to listen to an original idea proposed by Debbie Dunham, who was the hostess. Four of the cousins, Ned and Susie Palmer and the Dunham boys from Cleveland—Frank and Fred—were spending the holidays at the home of Mr. Dunham, Debbie's father, while the other two, Grace and Gussie Appleton, lived up the Avenue. Christmas had been coming for about a year, Debbie said, and the nearer it came the more she dreaded the "Christmas-present" business. It was the same old story always—trying and trying to think what to get or to make for boys, and what would be sure to please the girls, and *what in this world* to give to the grown-ups that would not seem small and mean compared with the presents she was sure to receive from them.

"Really and truly," wound up Debbie—looking as unhappy as she could with her "shining morning face"—"it's been an awful burden. And after Christmas I feel so horribly selfish and dissatisfied; don't you?" (There was an awkward silence.) "But I have a brilliant idea, I think. It isn't wholly original, but it's original as I have adapted it. What do you say to having a 'give-away'?"

"I thought you couldn't think of anything to give," said Grace Appleton.

"Not in the old way; but in this way I could."

"Just be good enough to describe 'this way,' Deb," said Fred Dunham.

"Well, instead of spending our money for each other at those tempting places on Broadway, let us invest it in flannels and coal and groceries, and—Now I know what you think, by the way you look, Gussie, and I know it sounds Sunday-schooly, and I don't expect you to like it all at once, but *I know you will*."

"But that only settles half the question. What about receiving presents? You can't prevent that."

"Why, yes, we can, Frank: just listen. One of us can be appointed secretary, and write notes to all our sisters and our cousins and our aunts, saying that we 'do not receive' this year, except in a certain way, from anybody. That we are receiving, however, for other folks, and that anything in the way of warm clothing and groceries will be thankfully received and faithfully distributed by a committee of seven."

"Oh, Debbie Dunham! we shall be called the 'Saintly Seven,' or something—I know we shall."

"I don't care what anybody says, if *you* only really want to do it; but if you don't, it can't be done, of course."

"See here, Debbie," said Ned Palmer, who would not let his love of fun cover his true feeling, "I'm in for it, of

course, and so are the boys. We don't care for presents, and whatever of a fandango this is going to be, you can reckon on us to help. Can't she, boys?"

"Certainly!" said Fred, who nevertheless felt his heart sink, though his manliness came up, as a hoped-for bicycle vanished into another year. You can put me down, Deb."

"Ditto," said Frank. "Three cheers for Captain Deb!"

"Oh, Frank, don't, please! You are coming up grandly, but we are not unanimous yet, you know;" and she sent a troubled glance over to the bay-window where sat Grace and Gussie Appleton.

"I think it is very lovely of you to think of such a thing, of course," said Grace, "but I could not consent to have notes written to our friends refusing gifts from them. How do we know that they intend to make presents, all of them? I could not consent to it."

"Nor I," echoed Gussie.

"I think you are right," said Debbie. "We'll have no notes declining presents. We will just ask for a contribution to our Christmas 'Commission' for sweet charity's sake. But we can have a general understanding that we are to have no presents, can't we? Mamma and Aunt Susie can fix it, I know."

Two pairs of eyes in the bay-window fell under this arrangement, and the color in two faces rose, and Debbie, whose genuine kindness of heart was equal to her energy, relieved the situation by saying:

"Well, let's adjourn 'until we have further light.' That's what Dr. Barnard said in the library the other evening, after they had talked the 'new theology,' as they call it, for three hours. Now let's talk it over with our mothers, and meet here to-morrow morning and decide."

"We have promised the morning," said Gussie; "but in the afternoon—"

"But we must know early, there is so little time to prepare. You can send me a note early, can't you?"

"Yes, we will send you a note," said Grace; and then the conference broke up.

This was on a Monday morning, and on Tuesday morning the note was received as described in the opening of this sketch. It ran thus:

"DEAR DEB,—We are with you, and you can count on us for anything. And we might as well confess that it was all because we were too selfish to give up what we knew we were going to have from papa—no matter what now. It's all right, and we have been horribly selfish. Do forgive us, and we will come around this evening and talk it up.

GRACE and GUSSIE."

This was the missive that Deb threw up as she entered the breakfast-room, and, catching it, described a circle round her head, and dropped it beside her father's plate.

"Ah!" said Mr. Dunham, slowly running his eyes from Deb to the note. "What's this?—Choctaw? Every letter looks as if it is being struck by lightning! Here, mamma, you have the sixth sense, and can read it, perhaps." And it was tossed across the table to Mrs. Dunham, who read it with suitable feeling and emphasis.

Oh, the conferrings and the confidings, the busy, buzzy times of the two weeks that followed! We will not lift the curtain once during that time, dear YOUNG PEOPLE, but skip to the third act, and the next to the last scene of the Christmas "Commission."

Debbie had said, "Of all things, don't let's do anything to make a display of our work—that would spoil everything"; and so no merry-making had been devised. The commissary stores were to be sent away on Christmas morning, and on Christmas night, after all work and care was past, there was to be a gathering of the family for the usual Christmas dinner. But on Christmas-eve, as Deb and Susie sat cutting slips of paper to be used in la-

bellng the parcels, Susie said, "Ain't you very, very tired, Debbie?"

"Yes," said Debbie, reluctantly; "but then I like it. Don't you?"

"Of course I like it; but I wish we could think of some way to have a bit of fun out of the work this evening to make us forget how tired we are. It will take us two hours to get everything labelled."

"My dears," called Aunt Susie from her willow rocker, "why don't you play at French fair? If French royalty could get so much pleasure out of playing at peasant life, why shouldn't you? I will make mob-caps for you girls, and box-caps for the boys, out of tissue-paper. Anice will lend you long white aprons, and the boys can wear towels for aprons, and you can improve your French by chattering to each other all the evening."

"Lovely! How *did* you think of it?" cried Susie, flying off to the others; and Deb saved herself from crying from

The circle broke at the first opening of the door, the boys retreating in good order, and the girls taking refuge behind a barricade of boxes at the end of the room. All but Deb—when was Deb ever known to fail in an emergency? She gave two or three glances behind at her retreating friends, then stood her ground, and received with a pretty, quiet courtesy the guests that were filling the room, until the six had recovered themselves sufficiently to join her.

Poor Deb! she scarcely lifted her eyes, and was glad of the fiction that made her a French peasant at a fair (which Aunt Susie had gracefully managed to continue), so that she need not talk about what they saw around them. But if the guests did not use their tongues, they used their eyes, and the little "Commissaire" was thoroughly examined. Susie's wit, which had failed her for a moment, did her good service in turning the whole affair into a play, and when supper (a new surprise to the seven) was announced, and the mob-caps and the box-caps were led out by their friends, it was all explained that nobody could be blamed but the guests themselves.

The matter of the "Commission" had got into the air, and the young people had talked it over, and decided that it was a duty they owed to themselves to find out how to get up a "give-away." They had leagued themselves with Aunt Susie—who has a great weakness for young people—and they had been allowed to come as a "surprise," and now they should never be satisfied—never—if they could not help in the matter of distribution. (This last from a group of five youths, ready to "do and dare.")

At this announcement Debbie turned for a few words with her mother, and then said that their services would be accepted with thanks; that if each would appear the next morning at nine with an express wagon, Richard and the boys would carry down the things, and they could have



"THEY HAD JOINED HANDS IN A FLYING CIRCLE."

pure weariness by laughing heartily, and crying out, "The 'Commission' a French fair! How appropriate!"

In the great store-room over the stables there was a novel scene an hour or two later. On tables and boxes all around the room were piled scores of parcels of all shapes and sizes, and on the floor were bags of flour, baskets of provisions, and barrels of vegetables and coal. Deb's intention of receiving contributions from her family friends only had been overruled, and stores had been coming in in the most astonishing way all day from—no one knew where.

At half past nine the last bit of work was done, and Debbie had sent word by Anice, who had come with an anxious inquiry from Mrs. Dunham, that they were quite through. They had joined hands in a flying circle, and were singing a merry song, when the door opened and a crowd of young people came pressing into the room, all with very eager and curious faces, and led by Aunt Susie.

the privilege of delivering them. Everything was carefully addressed.

The five glanced at each other, then came up manfully to the mark, and thanked Debbie for the honor of being allowed to assist in other than the French sense.

There was a mischievous twinkle in Debbie's eyes when, later, she said to Aunt Susie: "Isn't it a fine thing that those boys will really go among the poor and see things for themselves? And, besides, the little experience in driving an express wagon will not hurt them; will it, Aunt Susie?"

It was all done before noon the next day, and the volunteer expressmen vied with the cousins in saying that they had never known such a Christmas before. As for Debbie, it was the first really happy Christmas of her life, and, except for a little puff of self-satisfaction now and then that would rise and cloud her tender conscience, she was sure she had found the kind of Christmas they have in Utopia.





THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER

OF

HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE.

ONCE more the rolling year has brought the merry Christmas-tide, and once more HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, following the example of good old Santa Claus, has laid in such a stock of good things for the little folk that they are piled up and overflowing. With HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE Christmas lasts from the first of December until February. It may do for Santa Claus to make his one visit in a single night; but YOUNG PEOPLE knows the children better, and declares that two months of Christmas is not a minute too much. Last week Sidney Dayre opened the merry festival with her charming story of "Our Christmas Tree." This week Mrs. Hays, Miss Lathbury, and Jimmy Brown contribute Christmas matter. Then next week comes our Christmas Number, which is entirely devoted to Christmas, the Post-office Box and Exchanges being, in accordance with our usual custom, omitted, to re-appear again in the following issue. It is hardly necessary to say that the Christmas Number will be just as full of good things as we can make it.

The opening story, "A Disappointed Christmas," illustrated by Mr. F. Dielman, will be from the author who during the past year established such a hold upon the hearts of the little folk, Mrs. Lucy C. Lillie. So far our readers have known but very little of Mr. Ernest Ingersoll, but from him will come a striking boy's story entitled "Mrs. Larsen's Christmas Gift," illustrated by our well-known artist Mr. W. A. Rogers. Mrs. Eyttinge contributes a tender little Christmas poem, illustrated by Mrs. Jessie Shepherd. To Mr. Howard Pyle and Mr. Edward L. Stevenson our readers will owe their thanks for a most charming little operetta entitled "The Revolt of the Holidays," with Santa Claus as a prominent personage, suitable to be enacted on Christmas night or at any time during the holiday season. The concluding page of the Number will be given to a carol, the music by Mr. George William Warren, and illustrated by Mrs. Jessie Shepherd.

During the month of January there will be an article from the Right Rev. Bishop Dudley, entitled "Christmas Morning," Christmas stories by Miss Louisa M. Alcott, Mrs. Kate Upson Clark, and Miss Sophie Swett, and Christmas poems by Mrs. M. E. Sangster, Miss Sarah J. Burke, and others.

We shall also give in our issue for December 25 the opening chapters of a new serial, entitled,

"THE ICE QUEEN,"

BY ERNEST INGERSOLL.

Mr. Ingersoll has long since established a reputation for telling delightful stories to little folk. In this story the scenes are laid neither on land nor sea. This sounds like a strange statement, but instead of choosing any part of earth or ocean

as a background for the tale he has to tell, Mr. Ingersoll makes his heroes and their companion, called, from her merry temper and clear common-sense, the "Ice Queen," traverse one of our Northern lakes for a distance of over a hundred miles when the waters of the lake are held fast by winter's icy chain. The incidents of this journey form the body of the story, and it is one which in interest and novelty will not disappoint those who have formed high expectations of the serial stories to be found in HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE.

OUR POST-OFFICE BOX.

SUTTON, NEBRASKA.

A very dear auntie in New York sends me HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE this year, and I watch eagerly for Thursday's mail, which brings it to me. I can not tell you how much I enjoy it. All the stories are nice, but I think I laugh most over Jimmy Brown's, and the Post-office Box. I like very much. I am seven years old, and was born in Erie, Pennsylvania, where my papa and little sister Helen died when I was two years old. Mamma came to Nebraska, hoping the change of climate would make me strong. Sutton is a nice growing town, and, unlike most prairie towns, has a stream running through it; also a beautiful natural grove of forest trees, many of which look as if they might have been growing here for centuries.

I go to school, and am learning to write, but do not yet write well enough to write a letter. Mamma is writing this for me. I had a beautiful little kitty, gray and white, but she followed me to Sunday-school, and never came home again. I was very sorry. When you go to California I want you to come to Sutton and see mamma and me. I enclose five cents, for which will you please to send me a Nautilus pattern for my dolly, length 12 inches?

MARY M. G.

Thanks for your nice little letter and the kind invitation. I suppose the dolly was pleased with her new dress. So far I have not heard of a single doll so unreasonable as not to be proud of the Nautilus.

WOODSIDE (NEAR LINCOLN), NORTH CAROLINA.

Do any of you remember still the Sunday-school at Woodside? It was begun some years ago, and has gone on steadily ever since—has grown and improved all the time. All our help has come through the readers of this dear little Post-office Box. We have been helped so well that I have not had to ask you for anything for some time. Now I would like some simple books to teach them A B C's and the first easy reading lessons. The scholars come and go, as from year to year they move to other land, and often get too far away. This gives us constantly new scholars; very few of them know their letters. In the colored school we have taught so many. We have now in the school that are reading in the Bible ten that we taught their letters to, and ten more who only knew them. I would like some primers very much. Then, too, it is near Christmas-time, and any help you can send me for the tree for them will be most acceptable.

MRS. RICHARDSON.

Mrs. Richardson's little school is a self-denying effort on her part to teach the poor white and colored children on her own and the neighboring plantations, so that they may learn to read, and also to sing hymns, and know something about God, conscience, and duty. She will acknowledge in the Post-office Box whatever gifts of books, papers, picture cards, or half-worn clothing are sent to her. Through her perseverance a pretty little church has been built, and many readers of YOUNG PEOPLE helped to furnish it.

WISTERMAN, OHIO.

We are a little boy and girl thirteen and ten years old. We wrote before, but did not see our letters in print. We have a white shepherd-dog (his name is John), and we have two pretty cats. We had a little kitten, but it died; its name was Cute. I take HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, and Willie takes *Golden Days*. We have a baby brother seven months old; his name is Charlie; he is very sweet. I like to go to school. Did not you when you were little? I think Jimmy Brown's stories are very funny. Good-by.

WILLIE AND FANNIE D.

WAVENSYVILLE, OHIO.

I am a little girl, and live here with my papa, mamma, and grandma. I have only one pet, a dear gray cat; her name is Helen McGregor, and she is as old as myself—eight years. My papa writes for the newspapers, and I took a trip with him to Rugby, Tennessee, a few weeks ago. We had such a nice time; but then I always have good times with papa. We went over High Bridge, which spans the Kentucky River, and is 276 feet high; I believe it is the highest bridge in the world. On our return home, when we were crossing it, papa took me out on the rear platform to see the grand sight, and the wind was blowing so hard that papa, the conductor, and ex-Governor

or C—, of Kentucky, all held on to me to keep me from blowing away. We went to see Mr. Thomas Hughes's mother and her granddaughter. They have such nice old furniture, and lots of lovely pictures they brought from England; and Miss Hughes has two goats and a pony. I could tell you a great deal more about our visit, but fear it would make my letter too long, and I do so wish to see it in the Post-office Box; I want to surprise papa. Mamma wanted me to write this, for she says I write very well for a little girl who has gone to school only one year besides this. If I ever send you another letter, I will write it myself. Good-by.

Your little friend, ANNIE K. S.

Mamma must be thanked for being your amanuensis. I am sure you will not need one much longer.

NEW YORK CITY.

My cousin wrote a letter to you, and it was published, so I thought I would try too.

Will you please tell me whether I can send for two or three odd numbers of YOUNG PEOPLE of this summer? Must I send extra for postage?

I have three sisters, Beatrice, Ernestine (or Ernie, as we always call her), and baby Amy. Ernie is only five, and she made up, the other day, a little piece of poetry about the swallow, which I send to you. She received no help at all. Don't you think it is good for a little girl only five? Mamma wants me to thank you for YOUNG PEOPLE; she says it is the best children's paper she ever saw, and is going to give it to five children on Christmas. I am nine years old, and my name is

HOPE R. F.

THE SWALLOW.

With young ones safe beneath her breast,
The swallow peacefully doth rest
Within her safe and cozy nest
The long, long night.

And then she cheerfully doth rise
Beneath the blue and shining skies,
And all day long she flies and flies
To seek food for her young;

And then she takes it in her bill,
And flying, flying, flying still,
O'er river, dale, and vale, and hill,
Until she finds her nest.

Will you give Ernie the very sweetest kiss you can, and tell her it is from the Postmistress for these lovely little stanzas?

Yes, dear, you can obtain any numbers of YOUNG PEOPLE of the past summer by sending five cents for each to Messrs. Harper & Brothers. No extra charge for postage.

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

I am a little boy seven years old. I have two or three little pets, a bird, a gold-fish, and a tame turtle. I had a dear little dog once, but it got stolen. I like YOUNG PEOPLE very much. As this is the only letter I ever sent, I hope you will please have it printed; I would like to surprise my papa with it. I will not tire you, so I will now stop. Good-by, dear Postmistress. JOHN C. VAN A.

The little boy's mamma told me he was ill. I hope he is now well. The dear child who writes the next letter has been a sufferer too.

I was eleven in the autumn. This summer I had typhoid fever, and have just had my hair cut, and my neck feels very funny. I have no pets but a dear little baby sister. When I had my hair cut off she said, "Never mind, Diddie" (that's what she calls me); "Dad made it draw before, and He will make it draw again." Wasn't that cute?

LIZZIE D. VAN D.

I am ten years old, and have lived here nearly all my life. I have two brothers—one who is older than myself, and one who is younger, and a little sister not two months old. We have taken YOUNG PEOPLE ever since it was published. There are now many subscribers in this place, but we were the first. I liked "Raising the Pearl" very much; and I liked "Dick and D." just as much, only I wish they had been longer. I go to school, and study in Appleton's Fourth Reader, Olney's Practical Arithmetic, Town's Speller and Dehner, Lossing's Outline History of the United States, Guyot's New Intermediate Geography, Grammar, and Writing.

JULIUS F. K., Jun.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

I am a little boy ten years old. I commenced going to school, caught the measles, and am now at home sick. I have wanted to write to you for a long time. My sister Katie wrote a letter to you, which you published, so I thought I would write one too. I love YOUNG PEOPLE dearly, and have taken it for a number of years, and I guess I will always take it. If you publish this letter I will be very happy, as it is the first letter I have ever written to you, and will write again soon.

CHARLES EUGENE F.

What a pity the measles went to school before you did! However, it's just as well to have the disease and be done with it.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

I am a little girl twelve years old, and I am in the First Division Grammar. I have taken YOUNG PEOPLE since last November, and like it very much, and hope papa will continue to take it. I tried Margaret Willis B.'s receipt for taffy, and everybody that tasted it thought it was splendid. I have two pet canaries, and they always answer me if I talk to them. I like "Dick and D." very much. We had a pet dog named Dash, but we took him to the country, and left him there, and when we came home we went to boarding, or else we would not have left him for anything. He had long black curly hair, and he would not let anybody touch my brother or myself.

HELEN B.

GIRLS' INDUSTRIAL HOME, DELAWARE, OHIO.

I am glad you thought my letter worthy of a place in the Post-office Box, and, at your kind solicitation, will write to YOUNG PEOPLE again, and tell you more about the Home. It is situated about ten miles southwest of the town of Delaware, on a farm of about 189 acres. Its surroundings are pleasant and beautiful. The place is retired, but not difficult of access. The grounds are tastefully laid out in gravel-walks and carriage drives, and ornamented with shade trees and flowering shrubs. The general management of the institution is under the direction of a superintendent and matron, but the seven different families are each provided with a matron, teacher, and housekeeper.

The schools are graded as follows: A and B Grammars, A and B Intermediate, and A and B Primary. I am in the A Grammar School. I study grammar, geography, reading, spelling, arithmetic, and United States history. My favorite study is geography. In addition to these we are taught to sew, knit, do laundry and general house work, and although they are not obliged, some of the girls learn to work fancy articles, knit lace, gloves, etc.

We have a beautiful library, and are well supplied with good books. I like to read, and spend nearly all my spare time in that way. We have on file in our library all the numbers of YOUNG PEOPLE since we commenced taking it. We also take and keep on file HARPER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE, and the Century and St. Nicholas magazines. The girls enjoy reading the letters in the Post-office Box, from which we learn what all the readers of YOUNG PEOPLE are doing, where they live, etc., and thus become acquainted, as it were.

The girls are received in the Home from nine to fifteen, and remain until they are eighteen. We have a Sabbath-school, and attend it regularly every Sunday. I am like many of the girls and boys who write to you—I would like so much to see you; but I can not, so I hope we will become ever such good friends through the Post-office Box.

NELLY M. H.

This is an Indian-summer letter, so very well done that it must go in.

SASSAFRAS, MARYLAND.

I thought I would try to write a letter, as you requested your little friends to do. The country is so beautiful, and the foliage of the sunac is prettiest of all; it is a lovely crimson. And the wild ivy climbing the old fences is a very bright scarlet. I will be sorry when all the leaves fall, because it looks so cheerful and bright now. Our school is situated in a beautiful grove, and we children enjoy gathering the chestnuts as we go to and from school. My little brother is so daring and reckless! he climbs the trees, dropping the nuts for us. We take them home to mother, who dries them and packs them in jars, where they keep sweet and soft until we want to eat them. It has been rainy for two or three days, and I am afraid we will not see the sun-shine to-morrow, and if we don't I will be sorry, as we have a new church, and I want to go. Our choice apples are all gone, the late varieties failed to bear this winter. I inclose five cents for the Nautilus, sixteen inches size. I would like you to come down and see us.

FANNIE C.

RIVAS, REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA.

I am a subscriber to YOUNG PEOPLE, and like it very much. My principal object in taking it is to perfect myself in English, which I neither write nor speak as well as I could wish.

Three miles from this city is a beautiful lake, in the centre of which are two volcanoes, one called Ometepe and the other Madeira. The former has been in a constant state of eruption for the last three months, throwing up ashes, smoke, lava, and large stones. The illuminated crater at night presents a very beautiful appearance. Strange to say, the eruptions are not accompanied with earthquakes. The island on which the volcano stands was populated by Indians, who are very industrious, but who have been compelled to abandon their homes and farms for fear of being killed. Our government was very liberal in assisting these poor people.

We have been waiting thirty or forty years for Uncle Sam who lives at Washington to help us in making the Inter-oceanic Canal, but as he does not seem inclined to do it, we have at last discovered that "the gods help only those who help themselves," and therefore the government of Nicaragua has proposed to the other States of

Central America to guarantee three per cent, on \$75,000,000, which is the estimated cost of building the canal. When this canal is finished I would like to make a bargain with some of the subscribers of YOUNG PEOPLE to send them five wagon-loads of oranges for one of apples. Oranges sell at the farms at the rate of fifty for five cents, and there are very few buyers even at that price. Oranges are as common here as blackberries in your country, and quite as valuable.

Nicaragua is waking up at last. The government is constructing a railroad from one end of the republic to the other, and telegraphs have already been located between all the principal cities of this State. It is not pleasant to think that when the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth in 1620 our largest cities, viz., Leon and Granada, had been founded one hundred years before. But the young folks will remember the fable of the rabbit and the tortoise, and while we think that the Yankees are the rabbit, we are very certain that we are the tortoise, and will win the race yet.

I hope you will publish this long letter, for I want to make that trade of the oranges and apples.

THOMAS S.

Your letter shows that you are gaining a good English style, and I think YOUNG PEOPLE will prove itself an excellent help to you in this.

COTTONWOOD SPRINGS.

I want to write a letter to the Post-office Box. I live a mile and a half from Cottonwood Hot Springs. People who have the rheumatism go there to bathe in the hot water, and soon get better. I was eleven years old the 8th of October, and had a nice present given to me. It was a large book. There is a large spring half a mile from here, and some fishponds; and three miles from here, still farther up in the mountains, is a beautiful lake. I was up there last summer, and had a nice time riding in a boat and fishing for trout. There are several silver mines around here. We get some beautiful specimens out of them. I would like to send the Postmistress some of them out of papa's mine. I will send you a little moss that grows on the mountains above timber-line.

ERNEST S.

The moss is exquisite, almost like a pencil tracing. Thank you, dear.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

"Dick and D." and "The Lost City" are lovely stories. We have two kittens, and I make one play on the piano. I had to give one of my dogs away to a person living about four miles distant. They chained her for a week, and let her loose on Monday, and on Tuesday the man who owned her went away, and she came home. We have got a pony. I have a lovely canary-bird, and we have some plants in the nursery, and he sits on them all the morning. I have a stove, and I would love to join the Little Housekeepers.

CLARA A. R.

So you may.

NEW YORK CITY.

We are two little girls aged nine and ten, and take great pleasure in reading all the letters that are printed in the Post-office Box, and thought we would write a little one ourselves to see how it would look. We would be very much obliged to you if you would tell us of some pretty things to make for Christmas presents. We have made so many we can not think of anything to make this year.

BENTIAL G. and CORINNE Y.

Some very lovely things which little girls may make for Christmas gifts will shortly be suggested in YOUNG PEOPLE. Little girls only nine and ten can not be expected to do very difficult needle-work, but if you look about, and find what papa, mamma, and aunty would like best, you will, at least, try to please them. A pretty bookmark, a little knit cap called a cozy for the tea-pot, a band for Eddie's hat with his name on, or a dainty tidy, may be made by clever little girls.

It may be thought by some of our boy readers that we are too strict in invariably forbidding the mention of fire-arms as articles of exchange. Let those who have had this opinion listen to this heart-rending incident. A few days ago a lad who had earned the money to subscribe for YOUNG PEOPLE by sawing wood, patiently saving it till he had enough, went with a friend to mail the amount to Messrs. Harper & Brothers. The friend writes the same evening: "Fifteen minutes after Arthur and I reached home he was killed instantly—shot by his little brother, who was playing with a loaded gun. His poor mother witnessed the fall of her child."

The little brother did not mean to do this dreadful thing; it was an accident; but the memory of it will darken his whole life. It is a safe rule, boys, never, under any circumstances, to meddle with fire-arms or use them as playthings.

Thomas M. C., W. M., and John G. M.: Your proposed exchanges would violate our rules.—

J. B. Brown, Jun., 200 Thames Street, Newport, Rhode Island, would like to correspond with young stamp collectors with a view to exchanging.—

Johnny A.: Against our rules to exchange fire-arms.—Louis P. O.: You may send another exchange if you desire.—The Recess letters are coming in fast. Do not forget this topic, little folk.—Jeanie Webster, Almond, Portage County, Wisconsin, would be glad to receive second-hand books, magazines, and juvenile papers suitable to interest a little girl through a long Wisconsin winter. She will acknowledge everything sent by a postal card to the donors. Some of you may be pleased to act upon the advice recently given in YOUNG PEOPLE with regard to books which you have done with, and Jeanie will not enjoy a story less because you have read it first.

—Miss Laura R. F. says she has found YOUNG PEOPLE a valuable assistant in teaching the elements of drawing to her little pupils, and the latter have been much interested in making kites and other toys from the diagrams given. Even the wee ones have been stirred to try their skill.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

DIAMONDS.

1.—A letter. 2. A cavity. 3. Something worn in the Highlands. 4. A drawing. 5. Wearer. 6. A term of affection. 7. A letter.

2.—A letter. 2. A boy. 3. Profit. 4. Agents. 5. A throng. 6. Before. 7. A letter. VOGIENE.

3.—In list. 2. An adverb. 3. A body of water. 4. A numeral. 5. In rind. W. H. COLBURN.

No. 2.

A RIDDLE.

Why does a sailor know what the moon is made of?

C. E. and A. K. T.

No. 3.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

1. A great general. 2. A celebrated battle. 3. A vegetable. 4. The beginning. 5. A quadruped. 6. Learning. 7. An American river. 8. Source. Initials and finals read downward give respectively the names of a celebrated battle and the defeated general.

C. E. and A. K. T.

No. 4.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

I am composed of 10 letters.

My 7, 8, 2, 10 is to exist.

My 5, 3, 8, 4 is to gain.

My 7, 1, 3, 9 is not fat.

My 7, 6, 5 is part of the body.

My whole is the heroine of one of Longfellow's poems.

ROSE-BUD.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN No. 212.

No. 1. Wren. Holly. Plum-cake.

No. 2. L D E A R
B E D D A R E D
L E M O N D A R E P
D O G N D
M O N E Y S A M
G E M S A G E S
Y S M E N

M P
D O G S A M
M O N E Y P A G E S
G E M M E N
Y S

W Q
W I G B U L
W I N E S Q U A I L
G E M D I G
S L

The answer to the Thanksgiving Puzzle on page 64 of No. 213 is as follows:

No. 1.—Dominoes 5, 1, 4, 8, 2, 7, 6, 3. "The dinner is on the table." Character, Ann Page. Act 1, Scene 1, *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

No. 2.—"Sit down and feed, and welcome to our table." Act II, Scene 7, *As You Like It*.

No. 3.—"Dainty bits make rich the ribs, but bankrupt quite the wits." Act I, Scene 1, *Love's Labor's Lost*.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from Lettie M. Mason, Frances M. White, Sarah Lee, Dottie, Gracie, Florence, Mulcl, and Annie Knight, Phillip S. Wescott, Mary N. Shafer, S. M. Woodward, Maudie Bigelow, Prescott Hylton, Hugh R. McKenzie, Donald Brown, Ellen V. G. T., Anna Mackleheny, Thomas, David, and Walter K., Stuart Robb, Elmore C., Dick Jenkinson, Little Fidget, and Emily Day.

A FROG HE WOULD A-WOOING GO.

A FROG he would a-wooing go—
Heigho! says Rowley—
Whether his mother would let him or no.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.

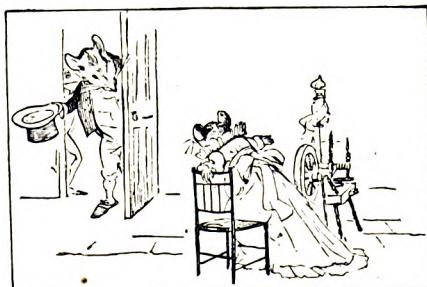


So off he set with his opera-hat—
Heigho! says Rowley—
And on his way he met with a rat.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.

“Pray, Mr. Rat, will you go with me”—
Heigho! says Rowley—
“Pretty Miss Mousey for to see?”
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



Now they soon arrived at Mousey's Hall—
Heigho! says Rowley—
And gave a loud knock, and gave a loud call.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



“Pray, Miss Mousey, are you within?”—
Heigho! says Rowley—
“Oh yes, kind sirs; I'm sitting to spin.”
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



“Pray, Miss Mouse, will you give us some cheese?”—
Heigho! says Rowley—
“We'd like a nice piece, if you please.”
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



“Pray, Mr. Frog, will you give us a song?”—
Heigho! says Rowley—
“But let it be something that's not very long.”
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



“Indeed, Miss Mouse,” replied Mr. Frog—
Heigho! says Rowley—
“A cold has made me as hoarse as a hog.”
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



“Since you have caught cold,” Miss Mousey said—
Heigho! says Rowley—
“I'll sing you a song that I have just made.”
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



But while they were all thus a merry-making—
Heigho! says Rowley—
A cat and her kittens came tumbling in.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



The cat she seized the rat by the crown—
Heigho! says Rowley—
The kittens they pulled the little mouse down.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.

This put Mr. Frog in a terrible fright—
Heigho! says Rowley—
He took up his hat, and he wished them good-night.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.



But as Froggy was crossing a silvery brook—
Heigho! says Rowley—
A lily-white duck came and gobbled him up.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.

So there was an end of one, two, and three—
Heigho! says Rowley—
The rat, the mouse, and the little frog-gee.
With a rolly-poly, gammon, and spinach.
Heigho! says Anthony Rowley.

HARPER'S

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"IT'S A POUND, MY DEAR."—SEE "A 'DISAPPOINTED CHRISTMAS,'" PAGE 93.

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A "DISAPPOINTED CHRISTMAS."

BY LUCY C. LILLIE.

I.

"**O**H dear, it 'll be just horrid! I sha'n't call it Christmas at all!"

"It is too bad; but, Nello, don't you suppose we could make up something or other?"

"What kind of a thing?" Nello, who was a tall boy of ten, looked up from his desk with a contemptuous air; but this changed presently. In the midst of disappointment, even, he remembered Rose's way of "making up" things, and allowed his frowns to relax ever so slightly as he watched her.

"What kind of a thing?" he repeated, as Rose continued silent.

"Well, I've been thinking of things," said Rose, turning around from her position in the window. "Last night I made up a play in my mind. It was something like this"—and the sister, three years Nello's senior, came over to the fire-light with a very anxious and thoughtful manner. "We'll have to think it out," she continued, "for I haven't it all fixed in my mind even yet. It's a sort of play of being fairies, or perhaps Christmas angels."

"Oh dear!" exclaimed Nello. He had really been encouraged a moment ago, but now he looked savage again. Rose was certainly the older and by far the cleverer of the two; but, after all, as Nello often reflected, she was "only a girl," and, as such, likely to think of things and do things that would seem very babyish to a boy, even though he was only ten years old, and had a round face like a cherub's, with blue eyes and light curly hair, and a dimple in his chin. But happily Rose did not always allow herself to be discomfited by Nello's ideas.

"You see," she said, "I was wondering how ever we would contrive to amuse ourselves if Aunt Jenny had to be away over Christmas, and we in lodgings here with nobody but Maria, and then it occurred to me that perhaps we could make a new play. We will play we are Christmas fairies, and when we go out pretend we're invisible, and watch for some poor child, and try to find out what he wants, and then surprise him with it, for you know aunt said we could spend our money just as we liked."

"How should we find out about him?" said Nello, still dismal, yet willing to listen to the plan.

"Oh," answered Rose, cheerfully, "that would be easy enough: I could show you. Come, Nello, don't you think it sounds nice? There are plenty of poor children all about, only we'd pick out the nicest ones—I mean the ones we think Aunt Jenny wouldn't mind our speaking to, or following home, or something like that. I promise you I'll make it a lovely play. We have three days before Christmas yet. But come, Nello, let's see if the lights are being lighted in our house yet."

Nello followed his sister to the window, and listened to her chatter about the house opposite the one they were in, and which they had called "our house" from the first day they had observed it.

How the two American children came to be left almost alone for their Christmas in London is easily explained. They were travelling abroad with their aunt, Mrs. Forrester, whose eldest son was at school in Paris. The young man was to have joined his mother and cousins for the holidays, but a fever had broken out in the school; the mother was hastily summoned to her boy's side, and Mrs. Forrester had been compelled to leave the children in London in the care of the trusty servant who had accompanied them abroad.

They had planned such a delightful holiday! They

were to have gone to the pantomime and to Madame Tussaud's, and no end of what Nello called "jolly places." But now all thoughts of the kind had to be given up. The outlook certainly was not very cheerful, for Russell Square, London, in December, is not a very inspiriting place, and although there was no fog, the weather was dull, and even with ten dollars to spend just as they liked, a walk every afternoon or evening with Maria was not the kind of amusement either Rose or Nello considered nice enough for the holidays.

The source of special interest in the neighborhood was what the children called "their" house. This was a large quiet-looking brick mansion directly opposite the corner on which they lived, and the fascination to the little Forresters consisted in the glimpses they had from time to time of the beautiful rooms within, or of the lady of the house and her constant companion, a young girl of about sixteen. Every morning regularly the old lady and her companion went out for a drive. The children at such moments had a vision of the long hall and the staircase, with its window and landing and gallery of pictures. They were divided always between their anxiety to watch the carriage and the house, and Nello proposed their taking them in turns, and comparing notes afterward—an arrangement which had worked admirably until the morning of this day, when Rose, who was observing the hallway, saw a wonderful sight. A door opened, a tall boy appeared, and at his heels five of the most enchanting little brown and white dogs.

"Oh, Nello!" she had only time to say, when the boy opposite vanished from view, disappearing within some other doorway. As for Nello, he had only seen that the young lady wore a different gown to-day—something embroidered—and that her wide felt hat had beautiful plumes upon it; but how could this be compared to the vision of a boy and five dogs?

"Perhaps we shall see them this afternoon," said Rose, the consoler, to her brother, as they stood in the window watching for the accustomed lighting of the rooms opposite. "Now let us think about our play for to-morrow."

It really was quite pleasant to plan for it. Maria had not come in as yet to light the candles on either side of the tall old-fashioned chimney-piece, but Rose and Nello liked best to sit in the fire-light at this hour of the day, when the objects in the large, primly furnished sitting-room seemed to take on a new character of their own. When Maria came in with the tea-tray, she almost stumbled over the two little figures on the rug, and who now, fully in the spirit of their new plan, jumped up, ready to confide it in part to the old nurse.

"You see, Maria," explained Rose, "Nello is so disappointed over Aunt Jenny's going away for Christmas, and he is little, you know, and this will amuse him, and do good besides. We will want to go by ourselves, because we want to feel as much like fairies as possible, and we'll promise not to go far—not much further than the British Museum."

II.

About ten o'clock the next morning the children departed, Nello holding Rose's hand rather tightly, considering that his character was that of a powerful genie named Albacroup, and Rose was the Fairy Queen Marvina—two names which were the invention of the night before.

They crossed the square, which was rather deserted at this hour, and not very bright, for a thin fog was creeping toward it, bringing a stinging sort of chill in its train; but presently they were in one of the side streets near Tottenham Court Road. To-day it seemed unusually crowded and busy, and the small genie and his fairy companion

were pushed about rather roughly, until they stopped to look in at an old curiosity-shop window.

The case was full of all sorts of delightful objects: high china vases with shepherds and shepherdesses on them; queer pieces of jewelry, work-boxes, tortoise-shell combs, fans, and beads of every description; and at the back were small bits of armor, some guns and rifles, with powder-flasks and horns richly inlaid or carved.

From time to time they could see, within, the face of an old man in a red skull-cap, and who seemed quite in keeping with the old wares which he had for sale, and in looking at him and his window the little Forresters almost forgot their mission. Suddenly Rose remembered herself, and at the same time Nello exclaimed, in an excited whisper,

"Oh, Rose, look at that little girl!"

A short distance from them stood a child about thirteen gazing wistfully into the window of a bakery where candies and sweets mingled their fascinations with cakes and buns and rolls, a pyramid of jam tarts occupying the central place of honor.

Hunger and something like actual suffering were in the childish face pressed so close to that alluring pane of glass. She looked very wretched, but had evidently grown used to shivering with cold, yet there was something attractive in her little figure, a certain sweetness in the thin features, the dark eyes, and small mouth, and decidedly an attempt at neatness in the poor, threadbare garments.

Rose took the lead at once. "I will speak to her, Nello," she whispered, her quick instinct of humanity making the little girl forget for the moment her character as a fairy. "She looks hungry. It would be nice to take her right into the shop and buy her a lot of things."

"And let her choose," responded Nello. "Yes. Hurry, Rose; she may go away."

But the little girl at the bakery appeared to be in no haste to end her vision of the delights before her. A strange patient look was on the face which she lifted when the children approached her, but for a moment she seemed not to understand what Rose said.

"We would like to buy some things for you," said the fairy Marvina. "Will you come in and choose them?"

"That is just as a fairy would do it," thought Rose, as the poor child's face flushed with surprise and pleasure. "Will you come in?" she said, aloud.

"Oh, thank you, miss," was stammered forth. "I—oh—I should be glad of some—rolls."

"Rolls!" said Nello, contemptuously. "Why, rolls are nothing. You must have cake and candies. Rolls are nothing."

The object of their charity smiled at the round bright-faced little boy to whom "rolls were nothing," and then all three children looked pleased together. They went into the shop, where Rose, with a business-like air, began making purchases, the poor child standing by with a delighted expression and Nello looking at her closely, while he asked in a whisper where she lived. But the little boy could not understand her answer. A street with a long name—a foolish name, Nello said afterward.

"Have you sisters and brothers?" he asked.

"No," said the girl, quietly; "there's only grandfather and me."

"And are you poor?" he added, gently.

"Yes," she said, in a low tone; "very poor, since grandfather broke his leg, and he's been in bed ever since."

"Oh dear!" said Nello, very much interested. "Won't you tell me your name? We are fairies now, Rose and I, but at home and *really*, you know, my name is Nello—that is, it is Nelson, but I'm always called Nello—and Rose is my sister."

The child smiled brightly. "My name is Agnes," she said, a little timidly, "and grandfather is John Truefitt.

Oh, thank you, miss," she added, suddenly, as Rose with great delight helped her to gather up the parcels—"thank you so much!"

They were ready to go. Rose was wondering whether she had not better offer Agnes a little money. She had only spent one dollar, and fifty cents in money might be a great help, when a most extraordinary thing happened.

The girl had laid some of the parcels down on the counter, and was preparing to gather them all up in a more satisfactory manner, when, like a flash, a change seemed to come over her. Her eyes had wandered to the street, where the Forresters saw nothing in the least uncommon, but with an exclamation of "Oh! oh! I beg your pardon," Agnes suddenly darted forward through the door Nello was holding open, and before either of her new friends could say a word was gone, flying down the street, lost to view in the gray mist and fog of the morning.

Rose and her brother exchanged glances of dismay.

The woman in the bakery began to laugh. "Well, I say," she exclaimed, "that was a start. What ever's she gone for? The hussy—after your buying her all these things. I'd give it to her if I caught her."

"Oh," said Rose, hurriedly, "something happened which we did not see. She will come back, perhaps. Will you keep the things, please?—Nello," she added, in a quick whisper, "I think we had better go on now."

And poor little Rose, disheartened and half frightened, caught her brother's hand and swept him away out of the store, feeling that it was very hard work to keep tears of alarm or disappointment from gathering.

As for Nello, he was reduced to silence for a moment by what had occurred. Then he broke forth with: "Perhaps she was a fairy herself, Rose."

"Nonsense!" said his sister, a little sharply.

Poor Rose! she was hurt and bewildered, and her fancies about Albacroup and Marvina crumbled away, leaving her in a most uncomfortable frame of mind. "Fairies are foolish things to play about, Nello. But where do you suppose she went?" she added, feeling that even Nello's ideas might be a comfort at such a moment.

"Oh, perhaps she'll come back. Let us wait, Rose," pleaded the little boy. "She is sure to come back."

But half an hour's waiting availed them nothing. For what reason they could not divine, but the object of their impulsive charity had vanished, it seemed, completely and forever, and with her so much of their pleasure that they were glad enough to hurry home and to confide their disappointment to Maria. If their effort had ended in failure, at least there was a touch of unexpected adventure in it, and before dinner-time Rose had come to the conclusion that they would be sure to hear something further of the mysterious Agnes by going to the bakery at the same hour the next day.

"It is always better to go at the *same hour*," she said, impressively, to Nello; "perhaps we won't find her until the third time, but we'll *try*."

III.

Rose came down the next morning determined not to let the disappointment of yesterday overshadow their breakfast hour.

Nello thought it great fun to have their meals alone together in the sitting-room. Rose sat behind the tea-tray, a wise-looking little maiden—not like Nello, for she had dark curls and brown eyes and a thin face—and Nello opposite, his round countenance and merry eyes composed into something like dignity when Maria allowed him to serve the cutlets or hand Rose the caster. On this morning, as Rose came into the room, she found him looking at two letters on the table.

"It has a French stamp," he said, handing one to Rose, "and you'll give it to me, won't you? Do read it quickly, Rose."



"SHE LOOKED VERY WRETCHED."

But the daily letters from her aunt were not affairs to be trifled with. Rose opened the envelope slowly, and then read the letter aloud to Maria and Nello.

Phil was better; they might be home for New-Year's Day, and if not, Rose and Nello were to come on to Paris; and meanwhile Mrs. Forrester said Rose could be "mistress" of everything, and Maria was to let her have her own way as much as possible.

Maria beamed with amusement at this, and both children laughed; but to Rose it meant greater freedom for her Christmas project; and being determined to try the effect of going again to the same place at the same hour, she hardly felt like spending any time in the usual watch of "their house."

But Nello had some information to give. Mrs. Toppett, the landlady, had a son who had just gone there as footman, and this youth Nello had been talking to the evening before while Rose was upstairs with Maria.

"And, Rose," said Nello, eagerly, "I know the old lady's name—it is Lady Blount—and that is her granddaughter, Miss Molyneux; and Joseph says they know the Queen and all the Princesses, and we may see them riding in the gate any day."

Rose laughed merrily, but she was greatly interested.

"And there's to be a Christmas party," continued Nello, growing doleful suddenly at the thought of their own

cheerless prospects, "for the little boy we saw. Oh dear! oh dear!"

"Come, Nello, perhaps we can have one by ourselves," said Rose, jumping up and putting her aunt's letter safely into her pocket. "Now let's go out again—it will be such fun if we can find her."

But on reaching the bakery they were told by the good-humored woman in charge that nothing had been seen of Agnes since the day before.

"If she comes this way, miss, I'll let you know, for sure," said the woman, after writing down the number of Mrs. Toppett's house in Russell Square.

It was small consolation, but the best that could be had, and the two children wandered home, pausing for another look into the old man's curiosity-shop window where a great many new articles seemed to have been placed since the day before. Among other things was the queerest-looking old book—a Bible it seemed to be—with yellow leaves and thick brown covers ornamented in silver. The flyleaf where it lay open was written over and over with words in a curious hand, and Rose, who had a passion for books, and had seen a great many old ones in a collection at her grandfather's, was interested keenly in this rare-looking volume.

"Oh, Nello!" she exclaimed, "that is just the sort of book Grandpa Forrester would be so glad to have! How much do you suppose it is?"

This was said only from a habit of referring to Nello, who understood that no opinion was really expected of him, and who continued to gaze at the guns and swords while Rose was deciding to ask the price of the book if she dared venture into the dimly lighted shop.

In a moment she had concluded to go boldly in; and holding Nello's hand tightly, she pushed open the little door, which closed after them with a snap and

the tinkle of a little bell. Both were a little frightened, and they stood very still while Rose asked the price of the old book in the window.

The old man with the scarlet cap looked down upon the children with a queer smile wrinkling his face.

"Why, my dear," he said, slowly, "that's an odd thing for a little miss like you to care for. It's a pound, my dear."

"That is five dollars!" said Nello, opening his blue eyes.

"So it is."

Rose hesitated, and then decided to wait for a consultation on the subject with Maria.

"I think, sir," she said, looking up at the old man with as serious an air as possible—"I think, if you can keep it for me until to-morrow, I might like to buy it."

And wondering why the old man smiled so strangely when he said "Yes," Rose took Nello by the hand, and they returned home.

IV.

It was the quietest of Christmas-eves. Rose, without moving or betraying herself to Nello, let a tear that could not be checked fall on the open page of her book; and as she gave her eyes a little hard rub, Nello moved one line of his tin army, and then looked out absently at the street.

"Rose!" he exclaimed, jumping up, "she's there!"

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She meant but one person to both children now. Rose was at her brother's side in a moment.

Sure enough, there "she" was—a little drenched figure standing in the wind and rain on the street corner, with a wistful pleading gaze lifted to the window.

"Oh, Rose!" cried Nello, wildly, "what does it mean? Don't let her go this time. Oh, what shall we do?"

Rose felt the importance of the occasion, but she too was excited. "Nello," she said, breathlessly, "you stay at the window and keep your eyes upon her, and I will run down-stairs. No, we won't lose her this time."

There seemed to be wings on Rose's feet. She flew out of the door, down the dusky corridor and the wide, old-fashioned staircase into the hall.

The door had heavy bolts, but Rose with eager fingers pushed them back, and rushed to the steps, quite regardless of the rain and wind which beat upon her little figure.

Agnes saw her. In a moment she was at Rose's side, trembling and flushed and almost crying, while Rose exclaimed: "Oh, we are so glad! Come in, Agnes. That is your name, isn't it?"

And the poor little stranger found herself suddenly whirled into the big house by impetuous Rose, who could hardly express the satisfaction this strange meeting gave her.

"Never mind about being wet," said Rose, eagerly. "Come upstairs; we have a fire. Oh, why did you run away from us? we felt so *dreadfully!*"

Poor, bewildered Agnes did not know how to answer her new friend's rapid questions, and she was in a state of agonized indecision about going upstairs in her wet clothes; but Rose would hear of no excuses.

"It's all right; don't be foolish," she said, much as she would have done to Nello had he rebelled at a critical moment like this. "But, see here, you must come up to my room, and I'll give you dry things to put on."

Agnes by this time was entirely submissive, and Rose led her on past the sitting-room, up another circular flight of stairs to a long room with two beds in it, and a big fire burning cheerily in an old-fashioned grate.

"Oh, miss," said Agnes, standing still before the genial blaze, while Rose bustled about, getting some garments ready for her visitor, "you *must* have wondered; but just that minute I saw Mrs. Jorkins—that's the landlady—going down in such a hurry with the book—"

"The book?" Rose turned her face around from the wardrobe, where she was selecting a suitable dress from her own stock.

"Yes, miss. When mother died, you know, she made me promise never to part with it. I don't know why, but I promised her; and we couldn't pay the rent, and Mrs. Jorkins she said it could be sold, and she would sell it, and she'd take it when I was out; and grandfather he can't leave his bed, you know, miss, and she did come in and get it, and has sold it. I saw her pass with it in her hand." Agnes's voice faltered. Her eyes filled with tears.

"But what book was it?" queried Rose.

"Oh, miss, an old Bible. I don't know just who gave it to my mother. Mother died suddenly, and it was hard



for her to talk; but she kept trying to tell me whose book it was, and what I was to do with it, and said over and again I was never to part with it. An old Bible, miss, it was, with silver clasps."

"Oh!" exclaimed Rose. "I know I saw it; I know I did!" and while Agnes with trembling fingers was dressing herself, Rose described the book she had priced that morning.

"That's just where she sold it, miss," said Agnes, simply. It did not seem at all so strange and wonderful to the poor child; but then she had not gone through all that Rose and Nello had. To her the most wonderful thing was this warm room, and the dry, comfortable clothes.

Rose decided very quickly what to do. She had a water-proof, and she was quickly arrayed in it; and then, leading Agnes down to the sitting-room and Nello, she told them what she meant to do. The book should be brought back, that being Agnes's greatest desire, and then—well, they would count up how much money there was left to make the Truefitts' Christmas a happy one.

When Rose Forrester is an old lady I wonder if she will look back to that Christmas-eve, and think all that happened very strange?

It was about three o'clock when she let herself quietly out of the front door, and turned toward Norton Street. The twilight was falling, and the lamps were being lighted, for on a rainy December day in London the dusk is early, and the streets show only spots of light here and there after four o'clock.

Little Rose was so absorbed by the importance of her errand that she thought of nothing else, and minded neither the hour nor the fast-growing darkness; only when she reached the old curiosity shop, and found herself in the midst of its confusion and queer objects, she drew her breath quickly, and began to feel a little anxious over the result of this afternoon's occurrences. She rejoiced that the old man remembered her, and that without much ado he gave her the volume in exchange for her gold piece, and when she was safely on her way back to Russell Square, she looked at the book, half smiling and crying together, and yet with a delightful consciousness that their Christmas would be a happy one for somebody.

As she turned to go, he explained to her that she must hold the book very carefully, for he had just begun to unscrew the clasps to see if they were worth anything as old silver, and so Rose kept it tightly clasped while she hastened onward past the shops, where Christmas-eve was evident in every window, and through the square, in which the leafless trees were beginning to grow very shadowy.

It was cold as well as wet, and Rose was glad enough to find herself in-doors again. She sped up the staircase, and rushed into the sitting-room, where she could hear Nello laughing gayly, and Agnes's voice in sweet, quick tones.

"Here it is," Rose said, and in her excitement over joining the other children she let the precious book fall to the floor.

They all stooped to pick it up, and at the same moment a bit of faded paper fluttered out.

"What is that?" said Rose. The clasp hung loosely, and as they picked up the book and the paper, Rose saw that the cover held a sort of flap, and the paper or letter had been hidden within it.

There was an awe-struck silence. All three children were on the floor, and they regarded the book and the discovery almost in dismay. Then Rose said, very gravely:

"Agnes, this is a letter—do you see?" She held up the paper. "And oh, look, how it begins! Oh! oh!"

"Begins!" said little Agnes, faintly.

Rose jumped up, and in the twilight they read the first line: "Dear Lady Blount—" for that was the opening line of the faded, long-hidden letter.

V.

Rose stood still, feeling that something very strange had happened. Other people's letters never must be read—that she knew—yet how could she find out what ought to be done with this one, which had evidently lain unseen a long time in the book, unless she read it? "Dear Lady Blount"—the words fascinated as well as startled her, and she looked from the sweet plain little face of Agnes Truefitt back to the paper again, a dozen ideas crowding into her mind before one took shape, and made her think of action.

"Agnes," she said, feeling very much like a general before battle, "do you know how that letter came there? It is to Lady Blount, and she—we know where she lives."

"I don't know anything about it, miss," said Agnes, wonderingly. "I never knew there was that flap place in the book."

"And your mother never spoke of any Lady Blount?"

"Not as I mind, miss. But, you see, I was brought up wi' grandfather, and only lived wi' mother two months before she died."

Rose looked out of the window across at "their house" with a beating heart. Her duty seemed very clear to her. No doubt, had Mrs. Forrester been at home, the matter would have been settled in a different and more formal fashion, but then Rose was only a little girl with the simple, direct ideas belonging to thirteen, and her very quiet life, in which she had been so often left to judge for herself. It did not occur to her now to hesitate. The letter must be taken over to Lady Blount, for whom it had been written, perhaps years ago, and she must then decide what should follow.

The rain had given place to snow—the vapory, cloudy flakes that in London are less like a storm than a thin white covering which vanishes soon, but gives everything a misty, silent look while it abides. Lady Blount's mansion was wrapped up in this mist of whirling white flakes, and Rose, as she stood a moment in the window, could but faintly see the lights in the great drawing-room windows.

There would undoubtedly be something very delightful about going there, yet the little girl felt her heart beating as she thought of talking to the strange old lady face to face.

"I will go," she said, suddenly, to Agnes and Nello. "It is only across the way; and then we will find out just what to do."

"Look for the boy," cried Nello, as Rose was leaving. The boy indeed! Rose's mind was occupied with a much more serious topic. What might not this letter contain?—what might it not lead to? Rose's heart was throbbing with excitement as she stood on the door-steps of the large house, and knocked rather feebly.

Inside, every one was full of the party to be given, and even the butler who heard Rose's little knock felt aggrieved that his work was interrupted. When he opened the door to the small figure in the water-proof, his first thought was to say something very sharp to her, but Rose Forrester's quiet, "I wish to see Lady Blount, if you please," had something in it which made the pompous-looking man in black stop short, and answer politely:

"Who shall I say, miss?"

"Oh, it does not matter," said Rose, quietly. "I only have something to give her. I—"

Rose was in the hall now. An impression of its length, the tapestried hangings, the beautiful wide oak staircase, and the pictures hung along the walls reached her mind and eyes very vaguely as she stood there clasping her letter. A door suddenly opened, and the young lady they had so often seen appeared with her hands full of flowers.

"If you please, miss," said the butler, stiffly, "this young lady says she must see her ladyship on business." The man spoke the word with a slightly sarcastic smile.

"Business?" The young lady stood still and looked at

Rose over her flowers with a sweet and friendly glance. "Come in here, my dear," she added, opening a door to the left; and as it closed upon them she said, "Perhaps you could tell me, Lady Blount is so engaged."

Rose looked up quickly at the young lady's kind, sweet face.

"Are you Miss Molyneux?" she said, with a little blush. "Yes, I can tell you. It is about a letter;" and just how my little Rose never knew, but she finally told the whole story.

Gradually Miss Molyneux's face changed its expression to one of deep interest. Before Rose had finished she had hold of both the child's hands, and was listening intently to every word. Rose had no thought of herself in all this; she told her story with absolute unconsciousness, and handed Miss Molyneux the letter with eager, trembling fingers.

"My dear child," the young lady said, as Rose finished, "will you sit here by the fire while I tell this to grandma?" and in a moment, with the letter in her hands, she had vanished.

Five, ten, fifteen minutes went by. Rose sat before the fire in the pretty little room, wondering how it would end; and then the door opened, Miss Molyneux came in with sparkling eyes, and Rose found herself being hurried along the hall and up the wide, shining oak staircase toward the drawing-room.

How strange it all seemed! To be actually going into the room for glimpses of which she and Nello had been so watchful! All the objects and the people in the beautiful parlor seemed in a sort of mist before her eyes. Preparations for the party were in progress; half a dozen young people were at work helping to fasten the last of the Christmas greens. Some one was playing on the piano, and three or four grown people were having afternoon tea before a great wood fire at one side of the room. Lady Blount was standing in the window, holding the letter in her hands, and she came forward at once to her poor, bewildered little visitor.

"My dear little girl," the old lady said, in the sweetest voice Rose had ever heard, "this is very strange. You have indeed been a Christmas angel. Do you know that this letter was written to me by an old governess of my daughter's? and it was never sent. Sit down here, my child; I will tell you about it."

Rose sat down, still dazed and wondering, while Lady Blount told her the story.

Long ago a nursery governess in the household, who had been brought up carefully by Lady Blount, married and went to live in a remote part of Scotland. After the first one or two letters nothing had been heard of her, and all efforts to trace her proved of no avail. Lady Blount had long since made up her mind that Agnes Martin—or Mrs. Truefitt, I should say—had been unhappy in her marriage, and felt too proud to let her old friends know of it.

Now in this strange fashion Rose had brought to the old lady a letter which the poor woman had written when she thought that she was going to die.

"And the Agnes you speak of is her child," said the old lady, with tears in her eyes; "and I promise you, my dear, her Christmas shall not be a lonely one. No doubt the poor mother in dying impressed upon her child never to part with that Bible, because my daughter had given it to her. It seems strange that all this time that bit of paper should have lain there unnoticed, but I suppose the little girl kept the volume carefully put away."

Rose seemed to have nothing to say after this, and she stood still a moment, only half conscious that the other people in the room were coming toward them, and that Lady Blount said, "Will you come back, my dear, to the children's party?"

It was certainly a moment of temptation, and Rose's first feeling was of great delight; but almost at once she

said, "Oh, thank you; but Aunt Jenny is so particular about where we go, and—"

Lady Blount laughed good-humoredly. "And we are strangers, you were going to say; was not that it? Well, my dear, you are a very sensible little girl, and quite right. I don't know many children who would have been so thoughtful about refusing an invitation"—the old lady's keen black eyes sparkled—"and perhaps when your aunt comes home we'll make up for it. Now, will you tell Agnes to come over here to me at once?"

And so, Rose thought, this was to be the end of their Christmas adventure. As she said good-by to the old lady and pretty Miss Molyneux, and went out down the shining staircase, she could not help just a pang of disappointment over it all—the giving up of Agnes, the loss of the Christmas party, and the loneliness of their Christmas-eve, all wrought together, bringing her down from the pinnacle of delight she had reached an hour ago. But it was a great deal to see Agnes's joy on hearing of her good fortune, to send her over to Lady Blount.

After all, the pleasure and satisfaction of the day did not end there, for while Rose and Nello were watching the lighted windows of "their house" there came a knock at the sitting-room door. A man with a huge tray entered and put his burden down, saying:

"With Lady Blount's compliments, to Master and Miss Forrester."

And there was a great Christmas cake and a glass dish of bonbons, and two packages tied up in pink ribbons, which proved to contain a delightful book for Rose and a game for Nello, and in each a card with the dear old lady's name written upon them. And the next day Lady Blount herself came over to see the children, and to take them to the morning service in Westminster Abbey. This invitation Rose did not refuse, and a memorable morning it will always seem to her. She sat beside the old lady, and when the anthem was sung, and the Christmas hymn, a sense of comfort, peace, and good-will came into the little girl's mind, making her far happier, perhaps, than had she spent her Christmas all for herself, and not given part of it at least to others. And, driving home, Lady Blount told them of her plan. Agnes was to come and live with her, and be taught some useful employment, the old man being cared for meantime.

Rose felt very happy and thankful as she listened to all this. She and Nello were so absorbed in listening that they were fairly at their own door before they observed that a carriage had stopped in advance of them with familiar trunks upon it. And then came a new delight. Aunt Jenny had come home! The doctor had declared that Philip was out of all danger, and Mrs. Forrester had hurried back for the two children, having carefully provided against carrying any infection.

Mrs. Forrester was standing in the hall as Lady Blount's carriage drove up to the door, and when Rose rushed forward with, "Oh, Aunt Jenny, I have so much to tell you," Aunt Jenny answered, with her kiss, "Yes, my dearest, I know, and I am very glad."

Perhaps, after all, Rose's greatest victory was in her patience over a "disappointed Christmas," as she called it ever afterward, and turning her mind—and Nello's—as far from herself as was possible. Even if things had not resulted so pleasantly for herself, she thought a long time afterward, there would have been a satisfaction in those days in London. The Forresters and Lady Blount's household have always been good friends, and they have often talked over that Christmas of 1879. But suppose nothing such as we or Rose Forrester would call "nice" had happened to repay her for her generous action? I think, even so, Rose would feel now that she had not wasted, at that dear Christmas season, her own tribute to Him who above all things came to make us love dearly one another.



THE CHRISTMAS-DAY.—By MARGARET EYTINGE.

OF all the days in all the year
The Christmas-day to you belongs,
The Christmas-day, my children dear,
When far and near sound happy songs;
For on that day, at early morn,
While loud rejoicings filled the skies,
The loveliest of babes was born,
The light of heaven in His eyes.
On Christmas-day, on Christmas-day,
Upon His mother's breast He lay,
While bright afar
Shone Bethlehem's star
On Christmas-day, on Christmas-day.

To grow in wisdom, and to preach
Truth, Faith, and Charity, and Love,
To wander through the world, and teach
The lessons taught to Him above,
All little ones He met to greet
And welcome, in His Father's name,
With kindly words and blessings sweet—
It was for this that Jesus came
On Christmas-day, on Christmas-day,
Made sacred by His birth for aye.
Of all the year.
My children dear,
To you belongs the Christmas-day.

MRS. LARSEN'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

BY ERNEST INGERSOLL.

I.

IT was Christmas morning. The day was a bright one, and the boy had had more presents, especially of money, than ever before; nevertheless, as Harold lounged up and down the road, he was not wholly happy.

"It isn't exactly fair," he was saying to himself, "and yet I don't see how to help it. Wish I could think of some way."

This young worrypate was a stout-shouldered, open-faced lad of fourteen, and as he turned upon his heel at the end of the short path his eye took in a complete circle of mountains white with snow from base to summit. These mountains were not far away and indistinct, but close at hand. In fact, he stood part way up the slope of one; and he was almost two miles above the level of the ocean, on whose distant shore was his real home.

Between where he walked and the opposite mountain sank a deep narrow valley, or "gulch," as the Utah peo-

ple call it. Its farther side showed a few rocky crags, dotted with spruces, where the snow could not lie on account of the steepness; and he knew, though it was out of sight, that his own hill-side broke off into a similar precipice at the bottom.

Looking down the valley toward the right, he could trace the road for about a mile, until it disappeared behind a headland of granite, turning the sharp corner on a shelf of the outer edge of which bordered upon the very brink of such a precipice as I have described.

"Somebody'll pitch off there one o' these days," he said to himself, "if anything ever breaks loose on the car."

To the left the gulch sloped steeply to where, four or five miles distant, a vast pyramid of snow and rocks cut off the view, except that over its shoulder Harold could count the tips of half a dozen lofty peaks, shining like white marble against the intensely blue sky.

This was a silver-mining gulch far up among the summits of the Wasatch Mountains. One of the richest mines

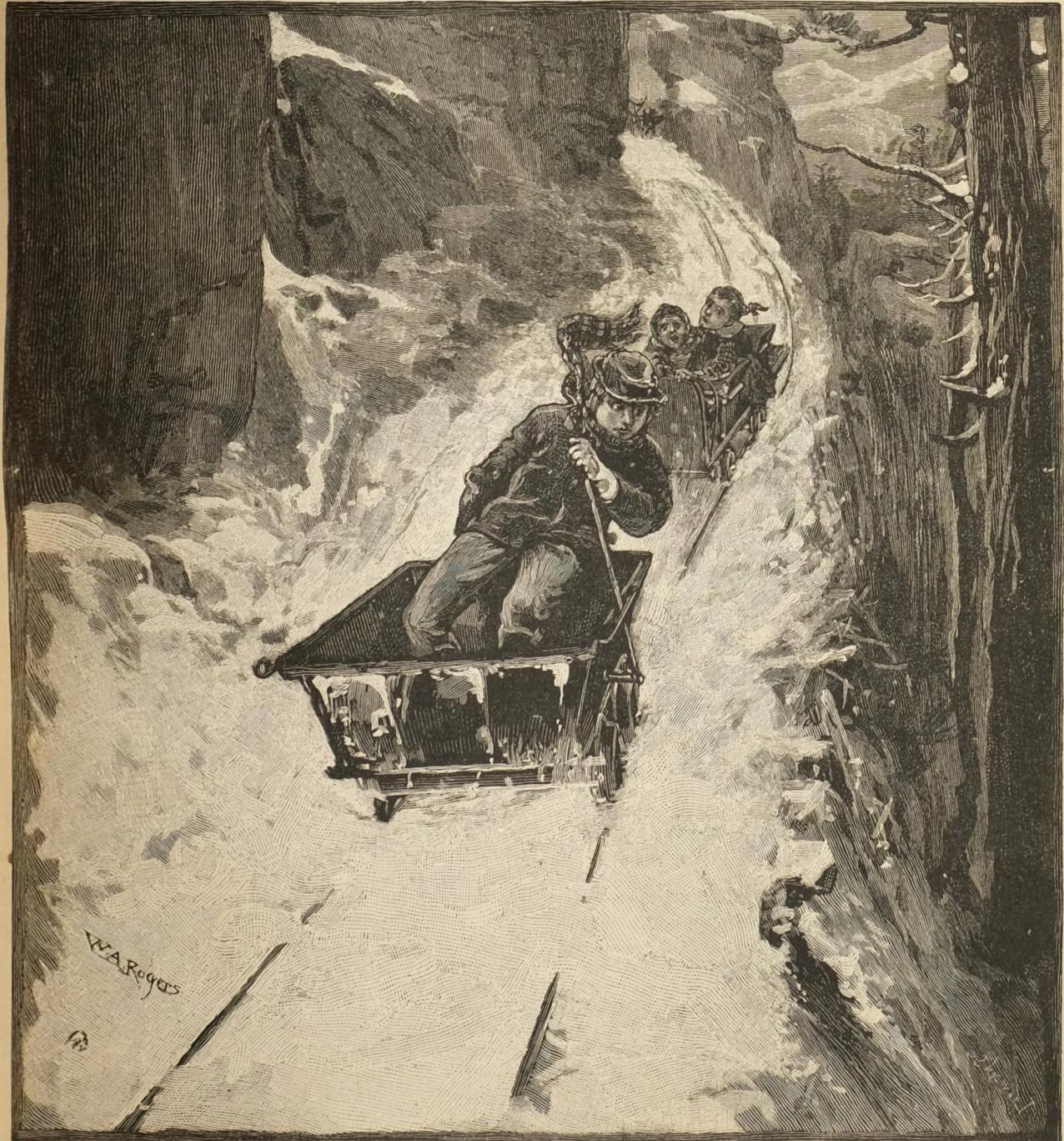
was under the management of Harold's father, who usually spent the winter in the East, or, at least, in Salt Lake City, making only two or three visits to the gulch during the colder half of the year.

This winter, however, the mine had called for close attention, and Mr. Morton had persuaded his family to stay with him in his snug cabin on the mountain, where Harold had found life by no means dull. Indeed, the lad's complaint just now was that he was having too good a time, yet he could not see just how to give anybody else a share in it.

"Here am I," he was repeating to himself, impatiently, "with a pocketful of money, good warm clothes, and lots of sweet things to eat, and there is that poor Lud Larsen picking away day and night to keep his people in bacon and beans."

Hans Larsen was a man who worked in Mr. Morton's mine, and had been disabled by an accident, so that his son Ludovic, who was nearly Harold's own age, had become the whole support of his mother and his two little sisters.

"Father says it won't do for me to give him money or presents—'twould make all sorts of trouble among the miners. Mother looks after the two little ones, and I'm glad it isn't my business, for if there are any children in the world wholly hateful, those two babies of Larsen's are the ones. There's nobody else I know that needs help, or would take it for that matter, they're such an independent set out here. Yet it seems to me I'd like to do something in the way Ivanhoe and Richard the Lion-heart and those old knights used to. But, pshaw! that's all gone long ago, and nobody can do anything heroic nowadays,



especially if he's rich. A ragged boot-blacker or deck hand seems to turn out a hero once in a while, but people never think a fellow who has been to school, and knows how to be polite, might be brave too on a pinch. At any rate, I'd like to give somebody a present this Christmas that would really make 'em feel glad I was around."

II.

Just as he was growling under his breath these regrets that the days of knightly valor were departed, and half despising himself for the accident of having plenty of money, a shout of excitement among the men and boys collected in holiday attire at the ore house aroused his attention, and made him run to join them, forgetting his somewhat romantic worries in an instant.

The mines in these mountains were all at a great height, as silver lodes in the West are very likely to be, and the gulch itself was too steep and rugged to allow of building a railway into it. From its head, where the principal mines were clustered, to its foot, and a branch of one of the Utah railroads came up, there ran a tramway about eight miles long.

The grade of this road was very steep—perhaps 300 feet to the mile—and it was laid well up on the mountain-side, swinging in a great curve around the head of the gulch, then coming pretty straight down past where Harold lived, until it turned sharply around the rocky headland a mile below him, and followed the ins and outs of the hill-side to its lower end.

This steep and winding tramway answered well enough, because all heavy loads came down, nothing going up except empty cars or light loads of provisions and so forth. The cars were rude boxes about five feet long and half as wide, mounted on small low wheels. Three or four of them would be filled with ore somewhere up the track, and linked together into a short train. Then a man would mount the load, and loosen the brakes by moving a lever. Their weight would cause the heavy cars to start down-hill at once, and would keep them running, the conductor controlling their speed by tightening or loosening the lever of the brake as he wished.

To go faster than ten miles an hour was thought unsafe, and when, as occasionally happened, a car broke loose and ran away down the grade alone, great damage was sure to follow.

The empty cars gathered at the bottom were hauled slowly up by tandem teams of mules, meeting and passing the down trains on side tracks. Harold's place was a sort of half-way station.

In coming down, these cars ran swiftly by their own weight, and no trip could be more exciting. It was as good as coasting, and very much like it, except that you had a mule to pull you back.

To-day, of course, was a holiday, and no cars were supposed to be running, yet surely there was one coming down the track from the head of the gulch. It could not be made out very well at first, but soon came into plainer view, spinning along the great half-circle which the track took at the head of the valley.

"It's a runaway passenger-car!" yelled a man in the excited group with whom Harold was watching the escapade.

"Great ginger! she's a-whoopin'," exclaimed another miner, as the dot was seen to shoot athwart the snowy background of mountain slope with ever-growing speed.

"There's somebody aboard—two of 'em!" was the next discovery. "Why don't they slow up? They'll jump the track sure, and it's no joke of a fall they'd get down the rocks along there."

"Maybe the brake's busted."

"No," Harold cried out; "it's Larsen's babies, and they don't know enough. I suppose they have been playing on the car, and turned it loose."

"Larsen's kids!" exclaimed the whole crowd. "They're gone 'coons."

What was to be done? If anything, it must be quickly. The little car, rocking and jolting under its fearful speed, but holding to the track almost by a miracle, was spinning toward the group of men at a breathless rate.

In two minutes more it would be there, if before that time it had not leaped the track, and hurled into the ravine the two little girls who had sunk down between the seats, and were clinging to each other's necks in a frenzy of fright.

"Get a big rope," yelled one man. "Hold it in front of the car, and catch her in the slack."

Several men started at this suggestion to bring a cable. Perhaps the plan might have succeeded if it had been tried, but Harold felt, with a heart that almost stopped beating in horror, that the time was too short.

Then a thought struck him.

Beside the station was a side track, on which several ore cars were standing. He waited to ask nobody's advice, but sprang to the switch, opened it, and, with a strength he wondered at afterward, pushed one of these empty cars forward upon the main track. Closing the switch with one hand, and jogging the car with the other, he clambered in and began moving down the main track ahead of the runaway, which was chasing him like a thunder-bolt.

"I have half a minute the start," he said to himself, as he glanced back. "If only I can get well under way, I can catch it and slow up safely. If it overtakes me too soon, it'll bounce me off the track, and then—good-by all of us!"

He was rolling faster and faster every rod. His brakes were wide open, and already he was making twenty miles an hour—a perilous speed; but the babies behind him were running sixty, and one of their axles was ablaze.

Two seconds later they were so near that he could see the whites of their terrified eyes staring wildly from under their yellow curls. The lad never remembered how much he had disliked them half an hour ago. He was too full of the possibility of saving their lives and restoring them to their mother—a Christmas present worth even *his* making! In a twinkling now the wild car would strike his, and the dreaded precipice was hardly a rifle-shot away.

"I am not going half fast enough," he thought, with an agonizing picture of home faces flashing across his eyes, and a fleeting temptation in his heart to leap out into the safety of a snow-bank and leave both cars to their fate. But he put this feeling away with the next thought, and fixed his mind on his work.

Grasping the upright handle of the brake with one hand, he clutched the grimy and creaking old box with the other, and waited the instant that should tell whether he was to catch and hold and slow down to safety that runaway passenger-car with Larsen's yellow-haired babies, or whether they all should go over the cliff together.

It seemed an hour, that brief second of expectation, while the headland loomed almost overhead. Then came a shock, a frightful lurch and rumble, a hard grip upon the jerking brake-rod, a blinding sort of pause, and Harold realized that he was still upright upon the track, that his car was grinding its way to a sullen stoppage at the curve, and that he and the babies were safe on the very brink of the awful rocks.

III.

Perhaps you may not call this feat a very great thing to do; but the men up the gulch thought it was just that, and nothing less. None of them expected to see any one of the three come back alive from that fearful ride.

It happened, just at the moment when Harold leaped into his car and pushed off, that his father came out of the house and caught a distant glimpse of him. Supposing his boy would be surprised and dashed to pieces before he

could get out of the road of the runaway, and not waiting to be told that Harold knew this car was coming, and had placed himself in front of it to try to catch it, Mr. Morton ran down the rough tramway as fast as he could go, followed by the whole crowd.

Both cars shot quickly out of sight, but the men hastened on, fearing every moment to come upon a wreck. You can imagine something of their joy when they saw Harold, safe and sound, standing beside the passenger-car, comforting as well as he could the screaming infants, who clung about his neck.

Mr. Morton folded his big arms tightly around all three, while the workmen pressed up to shake Harold's hand and slap him on the back, pretending not to see the tears on their Superintendent's weather-beaten cheek. Harold noticed these, though, and again seized his father's hand.

"Does mother know?" he asked, anxiously. "And will she fret? Bill Smiley"—turning to one of the boys—"please run and tell her I'm all right."

"No—no need of that," Mr. Morton exclaimed; "she doesn't know in what peril her brave boy has put himself."

"Brave?" Harold repeated, in a wondering tone. "Why, there wasn't anything else to do. It ain't worth bragging about."

That woke up a big miner who had heard plenty of boasting, but didn't often meet with modesty.

"Well, blow me over the range, if here ain't a feller as don't know he's got more sand than this 'ere whole chicken-hearted camp! Three cheers, boys—hoop 'er up! Now, then—one! two! THREE—TI-I-GER-R-R!"

How those hurrahs did go up! Three or four Utah coyotes can yelp so loud and so fast that you will think half a hundred are in full cry. So these dozen men made the rocky walls of that valley ring with such cheers as you would hardly expect to hear from three times their number; and as the final tiger yell echoed up and down the cañon, Harold was lifted on to the front seat of the car, beside the babies, while the excited men began to push him back up the track in the grandest style they could arrange on so short notice.

Little Bill Smiley, taking a hint, scampered off ahead; and when the procession came near home Mrs. Morton was seen waiting. The men broke into a trot, and cheered again as the platform was reached, and the lad leaped off to be clasped in his mother's arms.

"I'm glad you didn't know, or wasn't around," Harold confessed to her; "for then, perhaps, I should not have dared."

"There wa'n't none o' the rest of us had the nerve, madam," said the big miner; "and I tell you them kids would ha' gone over the cliff, sure as shootin', if it hadn't been for your son."

"Oh, you're all making too much of this little thing," Harold broke in. "But what about those same 'kids'?"

Somehow Harold's dislike of them was gone entirely. He was anxious about their comfort now, and would have quarrelled indignantly with any one who said their yellow hair, pale blue eyes, and snub noses were not as pretty as possible.

"Well, somebody would better take them home, I suppose," his father answered.

"Let's all go!" exclaimed Harold. "We can hitch up the mules and take you along, mother. You'll go, won't you?"

"If you would like it."

Five minutes later, therefore, the Mortons and several of the men had mounted the car, and were jogging up the snow-bordered tramway.

When they reached the head of the gulch, where were the mines and the little settlement in which the Larsens lived, nobody was on the lookout, and apparently neither car nor children had been missed. So Mrs. Morton and Harold walked on to the house, and knocked at the door,

leaving the little ones outside. A voice called, "Come in," and they entered.

It was a bare, cold, dark log cabin of two small rooms, in the further one of which, as they knew, stood Mr. Larsen's bed. A half-dead fire smouldered on the hearth, and at first their dazzled eyes could distinguish nothing else; but in a moment they saw that this front room also contained an extra bed, upon which lay the wife of the injured workman, as helpless as he.

"Are you sick too?" exclaimed Mrs. Morton.

"Yes'm. I fe bin sick since more'n a week ago—couldn't vash nor vork at all."

"Where is Ludovig?"

"He is gone to vork up at de Shpread Eagle Mine—and dis is Gristmas, too. It vas too bad—too bad."

"Then the money I gave you for presents for—" Mrs. Morton began to ask; but the poor woman interrupted her.

"Ach, my goot frrient, I had mit dat to puy some medine. And dose goot tings to eat vat you did send—vell, I dinks de shildren vould haf been shtarved except for dose goot tings you sent. But dey're all gone already, und I don't know vat I shall do."

"Where are the babies now?"

"Oh, dey're oud to blay. Dey shtay too long, but dey must haf some fun. Bime-by dey haf mebbe to suffer too, shust like me."

At that instant the door was burst open, and a shock-headed boy who did not belong to the Morton party rushed in, shouting, "Oh, Mis' Larsen, your kids has gone down the road on a runaway car, and they is both kill—"

He had no time to say more. Harold leaped at him like a terrier at a rat, spun him out of the open door, and pitched him headlong into a cooling snow-drift, "To teach the blockhead more sense," as he explained afterward.

At hearing the last word of this rude messenger Mrs. Larsen had tried to spring up, but Mrs. Morton pressed her back upon the pillow, exclaiming:

"The children are safe. They did go down the track, but they were saved by—"

"A young fellow who happened to be there," added Harold, before his mother could pronounce any name; and going to the door he called the two children in.

To see the deep joy with which that poor mother welcomed back the lost little ones, and to feel what might have been the scene had they been brought to that distracted home dead instead of alive, was too much for the tender-hearted lad, and he began to poke the fire with tremendous vigor. The next thought was, supposing that he had failed, and that *his* had been the mother weeping over a lifeless child, and— But he couldn't stand this picture at all, and rushed out, exclaiming, "Awful smoky!" for fear somebody should misunderstand the water in his eyes and the chokiness in his throat.

More than one holiday has come and gone since then.

The Larsens still live in the gulch, but they are well off now, for their sore distress was discovered and bountifully relieved before it was too late. There were people enough to tell the little girls—getting to be big girls now—the name of the "young fellow" who saved their lives at the risk of his own, and gladly gave them all his Christmas money into the bargain, turning into a blessing what might have been a dreadful sorrow.

As for Harold—well, he has given up worrying because there is no chance nowadays to do anything heroic. He knows it is a more serious thing really to be a hero than most boys suppose in their dreams of knights and conquerors; and when, on Christmas, he goes to church and hears of Him whose perfect manliness all men pattern after who try to make the best of themselves, nothing goes home to his feeling and his understanding like the record that of His own will Christ gave His life for the help of those who were weak and in trouble. "Greater love hath no man than this"—nor greater courage.



WORDS AND MUSIC BY EDWARD IRENAEUS STEVENSON.

CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, ETC.

Fred.....	Dark school suit appropriate to boy of eleven; strap of books; air of wide-awakeness.	Easter.....	(By a girl of ten.) Plain white robe; pale green mantle. Banner, a huge lily stem, on which hangs a large card-board egg, inscribed. Below her Easter dress she must wear full Columbine costume for the transformation.
Dora } Dorothy }	Effectively contrasted Kate Greenaway costumes for girls of ten. Two pieces of bright Christmas fancy-work.	New-Year's Day.....	Comic dress suit, completely festooned with visiting-cards loosely tacked on. Banner inscribed, "January 1."
Santa Claus.....	(As identical with <i>Christmas-Day</i> .) Wears the conventional Santa Claus costume, minus the pack, and with a bugle.	Saturday.....	(By a girl.) Comic fancy dress. Banner inscribed, and hung on a fishing-pole, tied with a tennis racquet. A quantity of games and sporting articles upon her person.
Thanksgiving-Day.....	Quaint black Puritan costume. Banner inscribed with name. Large pumpkin-pie of yellow paper; fork and plate. In his pocket or at hand a gorgeous red and yellow fool's cap, bauble, and cloak, for transformation-costume as Pantaloons.	Ballet of the Jolly Feeders (6)	Black costumes, relieved with yellow. Forks and plates.
Fourth of July.....	Continental military costume. American flag, inscribed. May carry a sky-rocket, a pack of fire-crackers, etc., disposed about his person, with the powder in them removed for fear of accident.	Military Ballet (8).....	Continental suits. German snapping-crackers.
Washington's Birthday.....	Similar dress to <i>Fourth of July</i> . Banner inscribed with name, surmounted by a hatchet.	Elves and Fairies' Ballet ...	(As numerous as size of room permits.) Conventional costumes. Boys and girls of seven and eight.

The MUSIC is as suggested below:

For the Accompaniments and Incidental Music a small orchestra or string quartette to re-enforce the piano-forte is very advisable. The music can be readily arranged. A Mason & Hamlin orchestral organ is nearly as admirable in its effect. In default of anything else the piano must serve. For the Prelude the brilliant little overture to Strauss's "The Merry War" is capital; but any lively march or galop will do. The "Easter Chimes" effect is charmingly imitated by striking with a wand, quickly yet gently, some thin glass goblets set in the adjoining room.

SCENE: Upon which, as the Prelude is concluded, the Curtain rises. A large drawing-room, brightly lit up; wide-mouthed chimney at back. L, a door, before which a gay screen. DORA and DOROTHY sewing busily by the fire. Raising their eyes, they sing the opening

Duet. Air, "The Silver Churn," from *Patience*.
DORA and DOROTHY.

Hurrah for Christmas holidays.
The jolliest days of all the year!
With merry hearts, and gifts, and plays,
We welcome in our Christmas cheer.
Each school desk now is gathering must,
Each lesson-book is thick with dust.
Our every stocking's darned, because
One rent would shock dear Santa Claus?
DORA. Sharp Santa Claus?
DOROTHY. Yes, Santa Claus.
BOTH. And all the merry world around,
Where boys and girls are found,
Who is the one who will not say,
"Hurrah for Christmas-day?"
(As the refrain is played they turn to their seats.
Enter FRED, roughly. He flings down his
books, etc. Music ceases.)

FRED (speaking angrily).
There! Just go stay there, hateful things!
I've studied till my whole head rings,
And only two examples right.

How awful hard at work to-night!
You two girls seem to be!
So hard at work! Do presents grow?
To-morrow's Christmas-Eve, you know;
But boys don't have to sew and sew
For any Christmas tree.

FRED. Don't talk to me of Christmas trees,

Nor Christmas either,

if you please;

It means to me exami-

nation,

And endless headaches

and vexation,

In spite of — well,

a present or two,

I'm willing, girls, to

own to you

That of all the few hol-

days, with their fun,

The long year brings

about,

Christmas is just the

very single one

I'd easiest do without.

(DORA and DOROTHY

spring up, and stand

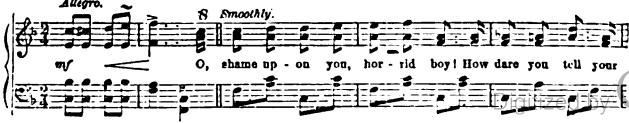
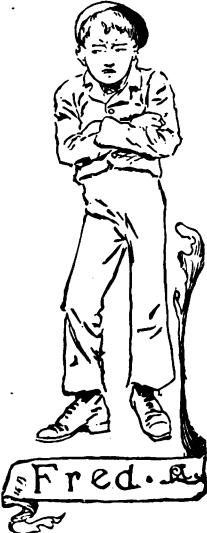
in shocked surprise,

R., pointing their

fingers at FRED.)

[Sighs.]

Duet, "O shame upon you, horrid boy!"



Dora:: Dorothy.

Poco roul. *p*

wick - ed thought ! If San - ta Claus could hear your voice, You'd suffer for it as you ought. What !

do with - out dear Christ-mas-day. For an - y la - zy boy at school ! Quick ! say at once a

eres. riard an - do. *Tempo primo.*

diff - rent say ! Or else your ears get such a pull ! Quick ! say at once a

diff - rent say ! Or else your ears get such a pull ! *For Second Verse repeat from §*

Ritard ad lib. tr. *Fine.*

Oh, bitter blows the winter wind,
And bare is many a wildwood tree,
But Christmas sunlight gilds each bough,
And fills the heart with revelry.
Chorus.—What ! do without, etc.

(As they sing the last measures they approach FRED threateningly. He retreats. A loud knock. FRED peers behind the screen, and returns.)

FRED. Be quiet. Such a curious stranger !

DORA. Oh, dearest Fred !

DOROTHY. A tramp ?



THANKSGIVING DAY.
(entering politely)

No danger.
Good-evening, my young friends. May I my name
And errand to you youngsters here proclaim ?

FRED. Yes, sir; speak on.

THANKSGIVING-DAY.

In passing by, just as it chanced, I heard
Your sentiments (to FRED) on Christmas-day; each word.
You're right, my lad. 'Tis time to stop this stuff
That people think about it. Long enough
This heathen Santa Claus has fairly made
Us other Holidays keep in the shade.
But now, brave Fred, if you will aid the fight,
A revolution shall break out this night;
And each of us appear and claim his right.

(Unfurling his banner.)

I'm old Thanksgiving-Day. Boldly I cry,
"This Christmas-Day no greater than I";
I swear it—on a sacred pumpkin-pie !

(Produces the pie from under his cloak, and waves it aloft. DORA and DOROTHY exclaim angrily, and turn away.)

FRED (eagerly). Yes, yes; I join ! Three cheers for mutiny !

You shall be leader.

THANKSGIVING-DAY. Then my army see,
Hallo there ! (As he speaks he hurls the pie from the dish, behind the screen, and then drums loudly on the empty dish with the fork. Enter the six JOLLY FEEDERS to the time of a lively March. They salute FRED and THANKSGIVING-DAY.)

BURLESQUE CHORUS OF THE SIX JOLLY FEEDERS.

Pomposely and rather slowly. (They drum with the fork on the plate, with a great clatter.)

The glo-ri-ous hour we wished is come ! Let

ev - ery jolly Feed-er drum ! O brave and gal - lant gen'men ! do

Drive San - ta Claus to Tim-buc-too !

(Drums as before.) (Two beats of the drummers, only; repeat throughout for Second Verse.)

Up ! up ! and march against the foe ! [Drumming as before.]
And eat your rations as you go. [Drumming.]
Give both our leaders three times three, [Drumming.]
Who lead us Pies to victory. [Two beats.]

THANKSGIVING-DAY (to DORA and DOROTHY, while the FEEDERS form on L).
Ha ! I forgot you. Will you join our throng,
And help the HOLIDAYS' REVOLT along ?

DORA. Never ! ten thousand times.

DOROTHY. I'd rather die

Than treat our Santa Claus so shamefully.

DORA. Shame on you, Fred !

THANKSGIVING-DAY. Arrest them.

FRED. Treachery !

(The FEEDERS surround the two girls, and guard them. While they do this, "Yankee Doodle" is heard being played softly on the piano in drum-and-fife effect.)

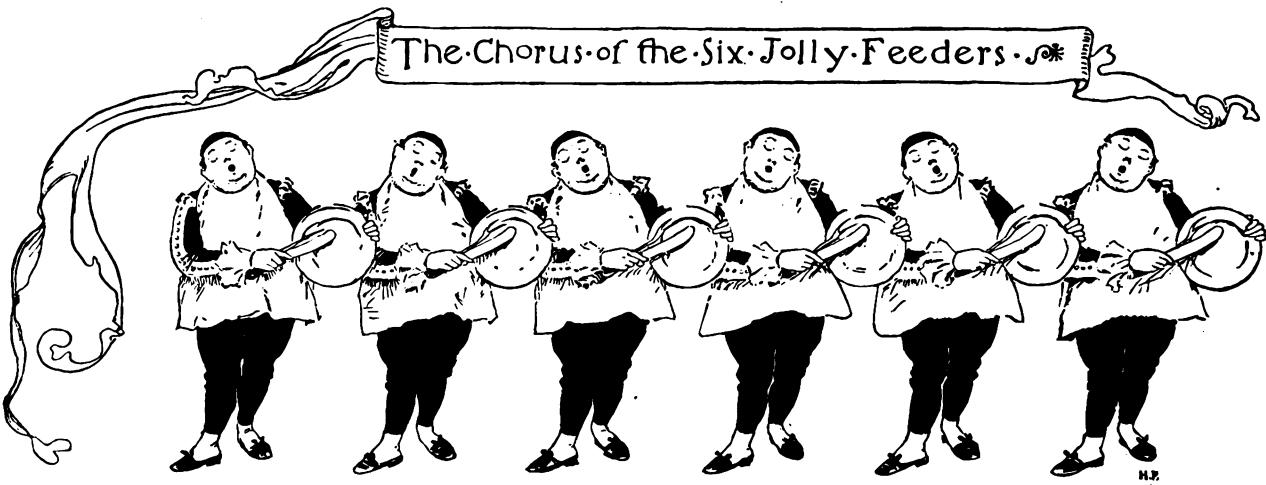
THANKSGIVING-DAY. Ah ! the good news spreads fast. I know that tune. [All stand expectingly. Music crescendo.]

Enter FOURTH-of-JULY: bowing
and followed by.
WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY.



Fourth of July. All hail, brave generals ! I've heard the news ;
Old Santa Claus is shaking in his shoes.
I and my followers hurried here to you
To find if such a glad report were true.
Success to the revolt you have begun,
And to assist it count on me for one.
My name is great, I think, from South to North !

The Chorus of the Six Jolly Feeders.



WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY. There! let me introduce the glorious Fourth.

FOURTH OF JULY. And in my turn let me present, I pray,

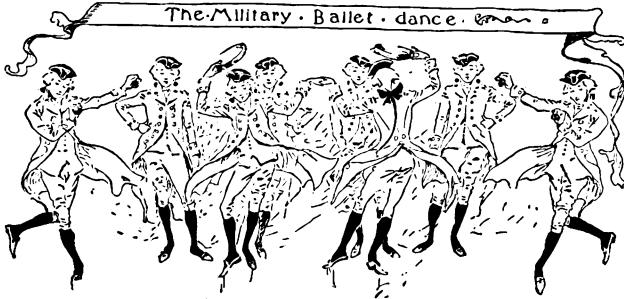
My near relation, Washington's Birthday.

FRED. I'm sure we should be proud our posts to fill.

FOURTH OF JULY. Soldiers, display your military drill.

One! two! three!

(The first figure of a brilliant Lanciers is played. The MILITARY BALLET dance, concluding each side with a discharge of the crackers.)



WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY. Hold! Who are these (pointing to DORA and DOROTHY), each with so cross a face?

THANKSGIVING-DAY. Adherents to the Christmas-Day disgrace.

We'll fix their penalties all in good time.

[Sound of the EASTER bells.]

Hark! what was that I heard—an Easter chime?

FOURTH OF JULY (looking out from the screen, while the bells are heard more clear and loud). Yes, surely. See! here comes a famous friend.

To join the war.

FRED. Whew! I did not intend

To go as far as this. But since we've started,

I'll not back out, to be called chicken-hearted.

(The bells chime. A Slow March is played. EASTER enters with SATURDAY, and attended by four Pages armed with gilt spears, and bearing garlands, etc.)

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY (meeting her). Welcome, dear Easter, welcome to this rally.

EASTER (saluting the assembly.)

Ah! you may well count me in as your ally.

When to my vernal home the message passed

That this revolt had broken out at last,

I flew to urge it. Fight?—Indeed I will!

I've heard, young folks of Christmas talk until

I hate the name. Let's find, attack, and rout him.

Then all the world won't rave so much about him.

[Flourishing her banner.]

SATURDAY.

But am not I of all the most neglected?

No child my claims to honor has respected.

I, the most faithful Holiday of all,

Far oftenest in the school-boy lot to fall!

Who ever knew me once to stay away,

Or fail to end his week with twelve hours' play?

Truly you speak. Welcome, good Saturday.

THANKSGIVING-DAY. [Looking about him.] Not yet are all arrived to join our faction;

But we had best discuss how to take action.

EASTER. One moment, please. I see another friend

Approach our ranks.

FRED (reflectively to the audience). I fear that no good end

Will come of this night's business. Don't I wish

I'd never jumped in such a kettle of fish.

Enter NEW-YEAR'S DAY, saluting the army.

All hail, bold rebels! I am known to fame

As New-Year's Day. Oh, 'tis a burning shame

The way this Christmas-Day has stolen our glory!

My blood boils every time I tell the story.

Why, people think so little of abuse

They dare to hint my custom's out of use.

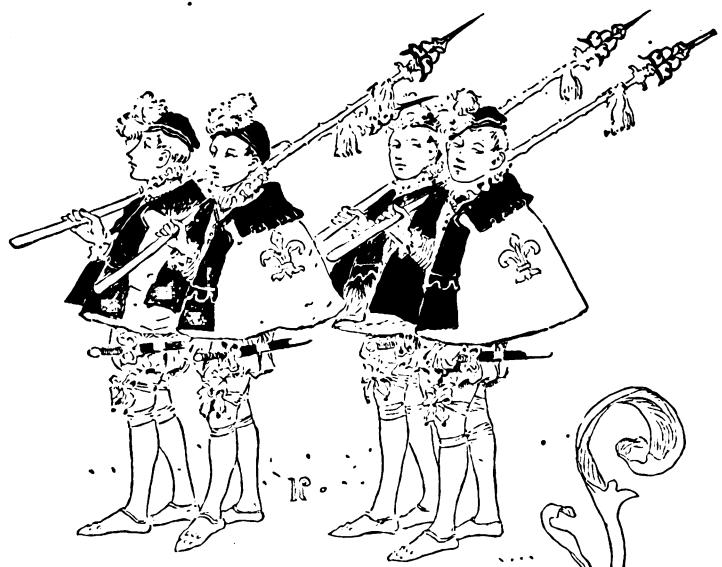
Let Christmas-Day be well upon his guard;

I'll smother him with my last visiting-card.

[Applause.]



Easter · & · Saturday ·



Four Pages armed with spears attendant

Let me propose my stratagem.
Old Santa Claus, no doubt,
Will make his rounds to-morrow night
To deal his presents out.
Suppose we lie in wait for him,
Seize, bind him fast, and then
Force him to promise solemnly—

THANKSGIVING-DAY.

All. Delightful!
THANKSGIVING-DAY (checking their enthusiasm). Never to come again,
No single stocking more to fill
Nor Christmas-box bestow,
No gifts to shower on boys and girls,

(FRED here walks away from THANKSGIVING-DAY's side in anger and dissent.)

And then we'll let him go.

EASTER. But if he won't?

In some dark keep
We'll bolt him hard and fast,
To starve amid the darkness deep.
So comes our turn at last.
For any living wight can see
That, Santa Claus once chained,
Christmas will no more Christmas be,
And so our battle's gained.
Such is my project. What say you?

FOURTH OF JULY. Superb!

EASTER. Too splendid!

Clever!

SATURDAY.

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY. The best!

ALL THE OTHERS. So say we all of us.

FRED (aside). Oh dear! I wish I'd never
Been such a foolish boy. They're bound—
Yes, bound—to be defeated.
How richly I deserve my fate!



Enter New Years Day.
saluting.

THANKSGIVING-DAY.

Attention! All's completed.
Most valiant rebels, 'gainst this tyrant foe
Keep up your lofty courage. To o'erthrow
This old-time folly is no easy task.
Once victors, each shall have what each may ask.
Up with your banners! Raise a cheer, because
We soon shall triumph over Santa Claus,

(Grand flourish and demonstration. The moment it subsides is heard the First Signal without.)

First Signal. (All.)



(Echo.)

EASTER. My goodness! did you hear that curious clatter?
NEW-YEAR'S DAY. Whence did it come?

THANKSGIVING-DAY. Nonsense! It doesn't matter.
As I was saying—

(Second Signal interrupts him. Sleigh-bells accompany it pp.)

Second Signal. (All.)



(Echo.)

THANKSGIVING-DAY (looking uneasily around, with all the rest).

Again that strange alarm! I—I almost think
That with it came the sleigh-bells' silver clink.

(Aside.) Good gracious! if it really should be he!

I'd hate to face him. He'd demolish me!

EASTER. Perhaps we'd—best adjourn.

I feel quite ill.

You'll all excuse me.

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY. Me too. Wait until—

(A tremendous clatter, outside and above, of bells and hoofs, is heard. The rebels all utter loud cries. Panic and confusion. The two girls are left alone in front of stage.)

THANKSGIVING-DAY. I'm lost!

Fly! fly!

The situation's tragic.

FRED. Ah! every door is locked and barred by magic.

But I'd not run. I've been a base ingrate;

I see it now. Let me my doom await.

Whatever happens I can not avert,

Nor can I suffer worse than my desert.

(Racket above increases. All the rebels stand as if paralyzed with fear.

DORA, however, runs up to FRED. Music of the "Conspirators' Chorus"

—from "Madame Angot"—begins p.)

DORA. Ah! my dearest Fred, I knew you would repent.

I'll intercede for you.

DOROTHY. And I, dear. Be content.

(They stand by FRED, as SANTA CLAUS bursts into the room from the chimney, followed by the ELVES and FAIRIES. Tableau.)

SANTA CLAUS (surveying the scene in contempt and anger). So here you are, are you? A pretty company, truly, and a nice business this that you have been conjuring up! Oh, I got wind of it directly. Shame upon you! shame upon you! Well, here I am to face you. Why don't you just throw yourselves upon me and my army here, and chain us all up, and do all your other terrible deeds? Ha! ha! ha! We'd love to see them do it, wouldn't we, my Fairies? You outrageous, cowardly, foolish band of conspirators, what ought I to do with you? Have you dared to think that you could, one or all, contend with Christmas-Day?—that's the same thing as me as long as the world lasts. Never in the world, my fine rebels, and now you know it.

All the rebels, in chorus, and bowing their heads.

PARDON MOTIF: Slowly.
(Orches.) (Orches.) D. C.

pp e trem.

(Repeat, playing the right-hand 8va. Small notes in the chords should be very distinct.)

THANKSGIVING-DAY (kneeling). Oh, gracious King of all our cherished race—

SANTA CLAUS. Look here—you, the ringleader; don't try to talk to me in poetry. I can't appreciate it under the circumstances, and it (mimicking) won't—improve—your—case. (To DORA and DOROTHY.) You dear little faithful souls! So you wouldn't be traitors to your old friend Santa Claus? I thank you; and your stockings will be a sight next Christmas morning! I shall now leave you to decide a very nice question. I must either blow all these scamps here into a thousand million pieces (a great cry from all), or else pardon them. That's my position. It's quite a point. What shall I do—eh?

DORA. Oh, pardon, pardon them, dear Santa Claus! (The Pardon Motif is here played very softly.) And Fred here—

SANTA CLAUS. Oh yes; I've not forgotten you, my young conspirator. It was a careless speech of yours that stirred up all this unpleasantness. But since it was a careless speech—and I'm sure you're ashamed of it and ashamed of yourself—why, I shall overlook the matter this time. Mind—you—never—grumble—at—school—tasks—or—examinations—or—me—again. Do you hear? Very well, then, you are let off.

FRED. Thank you, dear saint. I will be ever grateful,

And all my life—

SANTA CLAUS. No poetry, young man, if you please. Now, as for the rest of you. Down, every Holiday, upon your knees! Do you all realize the folly of thinking yourself greater than old Christmas-Day, your sovereign?

ALL. We do.

SANTA CLAUS. Do you solemnly promise never to count yourselves as anything beside us again?

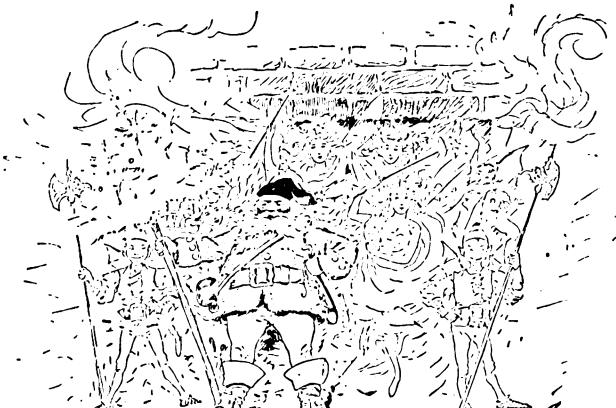
ALL. We do.

SANTA CLAUS. Do you swear never to rebel again?

ALL. We do.

SANTA CLAUS. (The Pardon Motif is repeated softly by the orchestra as he speaks.) Rise, then. You are forgiven for the sake of these two faithful little friends of mine here. Come, cheer up. I bear no malice. A dance will clear away yours. Strike up, Music (to a FAIRY). You, Star-Twinkle, touch with your wand yonder couple (pointing to THANKSGIVING-DAY and EASTER). Let all be mirth and jollity.

(The music begins loudly the last figure of a gay Quadrille. As THANKSGIVING-DAY and EASTER are touched with the wand they assume the Pantaloons and Columbine costumes. The Easter Chimes, the sleigh-bells, etc., are heard loudly with the music. As the grand dance, in which all the characters join, is in motion, a magnesium wire is lighted on the spectacle. The curtain falls.



SANTA CLAUS bursts into the room, from the chimney, followed by the Elves and Fairies. Tableau.

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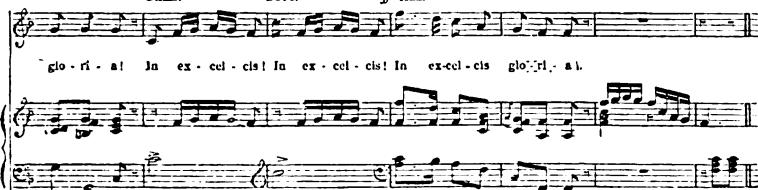
1. When Christ was born of pure Ma - rie, In Beth - le - hem, that fair ci - tie, The An - gels sang with
2. The birds - men saw those au - gels bright, To them ap - pear - ing with great light, Who said, God's Son is
3. This King is going to save man-kind, In Scrip - ture prom - ised as we find, There fore this song have
4. Grant us, O Lord, for Thy great grace In heaven the bliss to see Thy face, Where we may sing to



BOYS. GIRLS. ALL.



BOYS. GIRLS. ALL.



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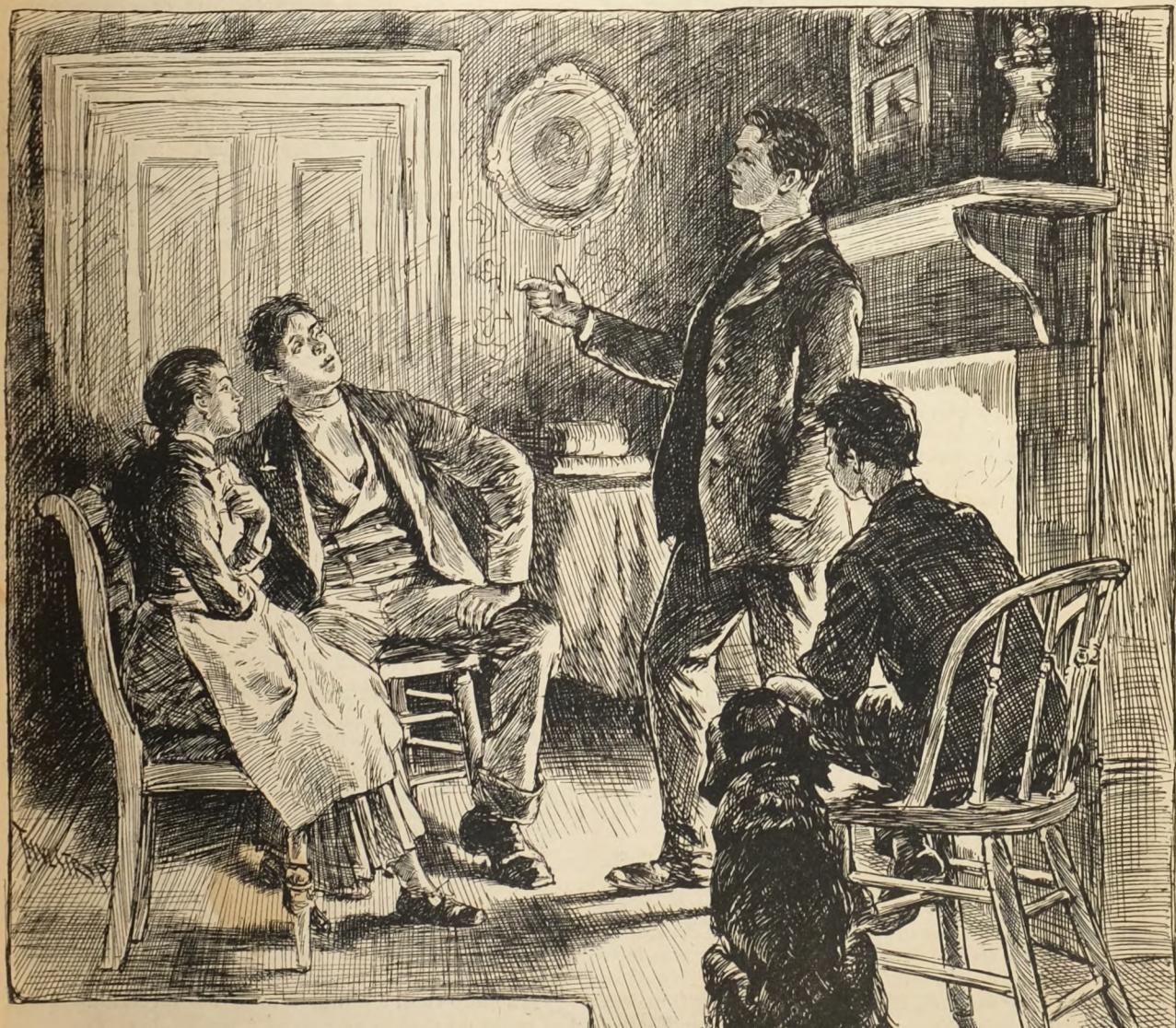
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THE ICE QUEEN.

BY ERNEST INGERSOLL.

CHAPTER I.

THROWN UPON THEIR OWN RESOURCES.

THE early dusk of a December day was fast changing into darkness as three of the young people with

whose adventures this story is concerned trudged briskly homeward.

The day was a bright one, and Aleck, the oldest, who was a skilled workman in the brass foundry, although scarcely eighteen years of age, had given himself a half-holiday in order to take Kate and The Youngster on a long skating expedition down to the light-house. Kate was his sister, two years younger than he, and The Youngster was a brother whose fourteenth birthday this was.

The little fellow never had had so much fun in one afternoon, he thought, and maintained stoutly that he scarcely felt tired at all. The ice had been in splendid condition, the day calm but cloudy, so that their eyes had not ached, and they had been able to go far out upon the solidly frozen surface of the lake.

"How far do you think we have skated to-day, Aleck?" asked The Youngster.

"It's four miles from the lower bridge to the light-house," spoke up Kate, before Aleck could reply, "and four back. That makes eight miles to begin with."

"Yes," said Aleck, "and on top of that you must put—let me see—I should think, counting all our twists and turns, fully ten miles more. We were almost abreast of Stony Point when we were farthest out, and they say that's five miles long."

"Altogether, then, we skated about eighteen miles."

"Right, my boy; your arithmetic is your strong point."

"Well, I should say his feet were his strong point to-day," Kate exclaimed, in admiration of her brother's hardihood.

"It wasn't a bad day's work for a girl I know of, either," remarked Aleck, as he took the key from his pocket and opened the door of their house, which was soon bright with lamp-light and a crackling fire of oak and hickory.

The house these three dwelt in was a small cottage in an obscure street of the village, but it was warm and tight. Kate was housekeeper, and The Youngster—whose real name was James, contracted first into Jim, and then into Jimkin—was man-of-all-work, and maid-of-all-work too sometimes, when Kate needed his help.

While these two are getting tea, and Aleck is carefully wiping the skates and putting them away where no rust can have a chance at the blades, or mice gnaw the straps, let me tell you a few things about the family.

Jim could not remember his father at all, and Kate only a little, but Aleck could tell us all about him. His name was Kincaid, and he was a master-builder of houses. He had bought and fitted up the cottage, and he had money in the bank, though Mrs. Kincaid was sick much of the time, and therefore money was spent that would have been laid by "for a rainy day" if she had been strong and well.

Unfortunately the rain came sooner than any one thought for. One day, when Jim was still a baby, creeping in small excursions from table leg to chair round, Papa was brought home hurt by the falling of a scaffold at the top of a house. He was not dead, and all thought he would be well again in a few weeks at most; but instead he grew slowly worse, and after a time died.

Then the poor mother, always weak, did the best she could, and Kate tried to help her, while Aleck stopped his school-going, and went to work in the brass foundry. At first, though, he could earn but a little, and Mr. Kincaid's savings slowly melted away until almost nothing was left. Then the tired and desolate mother, never strong, bade her children that long farewell that seems so terribly hopeless to all of us when we are young, and the three "mitherless bairns" were thrown upon their own resources.

The question arose as to what they should do. Jim was now ten years old, and going to school. Kate had not neglected to do some studying, and a great deal of reading, too, though she had always been so busy, and a few weeks before her mother's death she had been study-

ing regularly with a lady who lived near, and whom Katy paid by picking the small fruit as fast as it appeared in the lady's large gardens. Aleck, as I have said, was working steadily, and getting enough wages to keep them all in fair comfort, since they owned the house and enough garden to give them plenty of vegetables. So, after talking the prospect over, they decided to stay in their little house and live together. A letter was written to Uncle Andrew in Cleveland, who had offered Kate and Jimmy a home, saying they would try it alone a while before burdening any of their friends.

This decision had been made almost four years before my story opens, and it had not been regretted. They had even saved some money, but the larger part of this had been spent in repairing the house, and in fitting up a new boat for Jim and one of his friends, who thought they knew a way to make a little money in the summer vacation if they had a good boat. This boat had been completed only in time to prove how good it was, before the ice had come with unusual earliness and strength, and now the pretty craft was safely stored in a warehouse down at the schooner landing, a mile below the town.

They all slept very soundly after their skating holiday—even Rex, the great Newfoundland dog, who was a member of the family by no means to be overlooked; but their ears were not stopped so tight that the clangor of the church bells about midnight failed to arouse them with its dreadful alarm of fire. Hastening to an upper window, one glance at the blaze-reddened heavens showed our friends that the group of factories in the southern part of the town was burning, and one of these was the brass foundry where Aleck worked.

Aleck hurried away, and they did not see him until after sunrise, when he came home tired, wet, and soot-blackened. The whole shop had burned to the ground, and it had been only by great risk and exertion that he had been able to rescue his father's precious chest of tools.

"I didn't think," said the young man, as he sat wearily down to Katy's hot coffee, "that my job would be so short when McAbee told me yesterday I could work there 'as long as the foundry lasted.'"

During that day and the next Aleck tried every possible chance of employment in the village, but found nothing; and by the time evening came he had made up his mind that no regular employment equal to his old place was to be had there for months to come.

There was no doubt about it. The time had arrived when they must avail themselves of Uncle Andrew's kindness.

CHAPTER II.

"THE YOUNGSTER'S" PLAN.

"You see," said Aleck, "though I've got about seventy-five dollars ahead, yet when we have bought what we shall need, there will be not more than forty dollars left. Now if we go to Cleveland in the cars and take our things with us, it'll cost us twenty-five dollars or more, and leave us almost nothing to get started with there."

"S'posin'," said Jimkin the Wise—"s'posin' we don't go in the cars. Cleveland's on the lake, and the lake's all ice; let's skate down to uncle's!"

"Humph!" grunted Aleck.

"Pshaw!" said Kate.

"Didn't we skate eighteen miles yesterday, and couldn't we have gone farther?" persisted Jim, unabashed.

"It's more than a hundred miles to Cleveland. Think you could do that in one day? Besides, how would you know the way?"

"Didn't say I could do it in one day. But couldn't we go ashore and stop at night! That's the way the Hall boys did, who skated up to Detroit last winter."

"I read in the newspaper yesterday," said Kate, "that the lake was frozen uncommonly hard, and was solid ice

all the way along the shore as far as the headlands of Ashtabula."

"If we could be sure of that," Aleck admitted, "there might be some use in trying; but one can't be sure. Besides, how could we take along our baggage?"

"Pull it on a sled," said Kate—"the way they do in the arctic regions. Men up there just live on the ice, sleep at night and cook their food and travel all day, and they don't have skates either.—Gracious! Who can that be!"

No wonder Katy was astonished, for there came echoing through the house a noise as if somebody was pounding the wall down with a stone maul. Aleck hastened to put a stop to it by opening the door.

He was greeted by the grinning face of a round-headed chunky lad nearly Aleck's own age, named Thucydides Montgomery; but as this was too long a name for the Western people, it had been cut down very early in life to "Tug," which everybody saw at once was the right word, on account of the lad's strength and toughness. The mammas of the village, getting their information from the small boys of the public school, whom, in his great fondness for joking, he would sometimes frighten and tease, thought him a bad boy.

Aleck knew him better, and knew how brave and good-hearted he was. Jim had good cause to be fond of him, for in behalf of The Youngster, during his first week at school, Tug had soundly thrashed a bullying tyrant; while Kate gratefully remembered various heavy market-baskets he had carried for her, since he lived close by. A closer tie between our little family and their visitor, however, was the fact that like them he was an orphan, and like them had relatives in Cleveland, whom he had often thought he should like to be with better than staying with his aunt here in Monore.

When Tug had joined the circle gathered before the big fire-place, and begun to talk about the brass-works, he was promptly hushed by Aleck.

"Put that up now, and attend to me. This urchin here, who has become very cheeky since he began to go to school—"

"And came under my care," Tug interrupted, loftily.

"Yes—no doubt. Well, The Youngster finds we all want to go to Cleveland, but can't afford the railway fare, and so he coolly proposes that we skate there."

"Well, why don't you do it? I'll go with you," said Tug, quietly.

Jim shouted with triumph. Kate laughed and clapped her hands at the fun of beating her big brother, and Aleck looked as though he thought he was being quizzed.

"Do you mean it?" he asked.

"Of course I do. I want to go down as badly as you do. I haven't any stamps, and the walking, I'm told, isn't good. I prefer to skate."

"Katy says we might drag our luggage on sleds, as they do in the arctic regions; but supposing the ice should break up, or we should come to a big crack?"

"I have read," Kate remarks again, "that they carry boats on their sledges, and pack their goods in the boats, so as to float if the ice gives way."

"Take my boat!" screamed Jim, eagerly.

"That would call for a big sled."

"Well, didn't you two fellows build a pair of bobs last winter big enough to carry that boat?"

"Doubtful," answered Aleck. But when they brought out the plan of the boat, and then measured the bobs, which were stored in the wood-shed, they found them plenty wide, and Tug was sure they were sufficiently strong.

Kate looked at them rather doubtfully, and said she had never read of arctic boats mounted on heavy bobs, but that they always seemed to have long light runners under them; but Jim reminded her curtly that "girls

didn't know everything"; so she kept still, and the planning and talking went on.

Young people who are under no necessity to ask permission of older persons, and, besides, are pushed by circumstances, decide quickly on a plan which looks forward to adventure. Generally, I fear, they come to grief, and learn some good lessons rather expensively; but sometimes their energy and fearlessness carry them safely through what the caution of old age would have stopped short of trying to perform.

They sat up pretty late discussing the plan, but before Tug went to what he said he "s'posed he must call home," they had determined to try it if the weather held firm.

This was on Friday. They hoped to get away early in the coming week. Then all three went to bed, Jim jubilant and looking forward to a long frolic; Kate half doubtful whether it was best, but hopeful; Aleck sure that for himself he didn't care, but hating to put his sister and brother to any risk, yet seeing no better way of resisting poverty; Tug resolute and bound to stand by his friends, whatever happened. So they slept, and bright and early next morning the quiet preparations began, Tug declining to answer any questions as to how he settled the matter of his going with his aunt.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE NEW STANDARD TIME.

BY A. P. MARBLE.

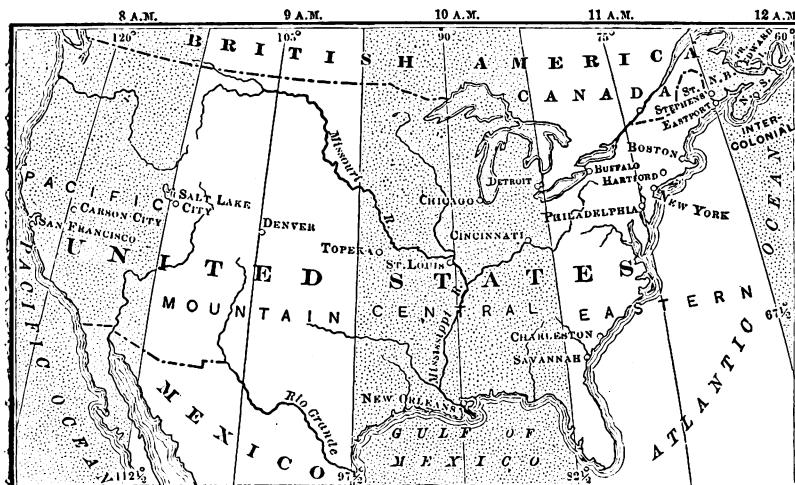
ON Sunday, the 18th day of November of the present year, the clocks in nearly all the railroad stations in the United States and Canada were set forward or backward to indicate Standard Time. The change was in no case more than half an hour. Nearly all the town clocks in the country were changed on the same day. This kind of time is now shown by all clocks and watches, and very few people notice any difference, except that it becomes dark a little earlier in some places, and a little later in others.

In every circle there are 360 degrees, and as the sun is twenty-four hours in completing the circle round the earth, he must move fifteen degrees each hour, or one-twenty-fourth of the whole. At the latitude of New York, which is not quite half-way from the equator to the north pole, one of these degrees is about sixty miles; so that the sun moves fifteen times sixty, or nine hundred, miles an hour; and in one minute he travels one-sixtieth part of this distance, or fifteen miles—about fifteen times as fast as the swiftest railroad train.

If the sun is directly overhead where you are, it is noon. One minute before he was fifteen miles east of you. It was then noon at that place, and it then lacked one minute of noon at the place where you are. One minute after noon where you are he will be fifteen miles west of you, and it will be noon at that place. It is easy to see that the time varies one minute for every fifteen miles all along the line east and west around the world. At any point east of you the time is later, and at every point west of you the time is earlier—fifteen miles, one minute; thirty miles, two minutes; forty-five miles, three minutes, and so on.

As the sun travels fifteen degrees in one hour, when it is noon where you are it will be one o'clock fifteen degrees east of you, and it will be eleven o'clock fifteen degrees west of you. It is easy to see that the time varies one hour for every fifteen degrees of longitude all along the line around the world. This has always been the case; and some one may want to know what is the need of making any change in the time to-day more than there was a hundred years ago.

People used to travel but little. They went on the land in carriages, and on the sea in ships, eight or ten miles an hour. We travel on land by railroad forty and even six-



MAP SHOWING TIME BELTS.

ty miles an hour, and on the sea in steam-ships from twelve to sixteen miles. A steamer starting at noon from Halifax may travel eastward at the rate of 450 miles in twenty-four hours; it will be noon when she meets the sun, but it will be only half past eleven at Halifax; for at the rate of fifteen miles a minute it takes the sun thirty minutes after meeting the steamer to reach that place. The steamer must set her clock forward half an hour; she has gone far enough to meet the sun half an hour before he came round to Halifax. On the return trip the steamer runs away from the sun half an hour daily; he does not overtake her till half past twelve; she must set her clock back half an hour every day.

The same change in time happens on a fast train. If the train start from New York at noon, and move westward at the rate of a little less than forty miles an hour for twenty-four hours, it will be noon at New York, but only eleven o'clock at the point where the train is—near Chicago—some 900 miles west. The train has run away from the sun by an hour's journey. If the train start from San Francisco, and move eastward twenty-four hours at the same rate, it will be one o'clock where the train is when it is noon at San Francisco. The train has met the sun; and in the twenty-four hours it has travelled as far as the sun goes in an hour.

It was said above that the sun travels fifteen miles in one minute at the latitude of New York, and that each of the points fifteen miles apart on an east and west line would vary in time from the point next to it by one minute. In practice, however, the time of a large city, where nice instruments are kept for determining the exact noon, was taken by the neighboring towns. Boston time, for example, was used in towns and cities forty or fifty miles east or west of the city; Hartford time prevailed in Connecticut; Springfield time in Western Massachusetts; New York time in the eastern part of that State, and Buffalo time, perhaps, in the western. There was Washington time, Philadelphia time, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco time.

There were more than fifty different standards of time by which important railroads ran their trains. This was confusing to travellers, and it made great difficulty in the arrangement of time-tables for the running of the trains. The difference in time between Boston and New York, for instance, was twelve minutes, and the time required to go from one city to the other is six hours. It would appear to take five hours and forty-eight minutes only in going from Boston to New York, and six hours and twelve minutes to return—an apparent difference of twenty-four minutes, when there was really none. But, worst of all, these varying standards of time were dangerous, for when so many trains are running, an error of

one minute might cause the loss of many lives.

The new standard has been adopted to remedy these evils. The country is divided into strips or time belts fifteen degrees wide, extending north and south, and every city or town adopts the true time of the central meridian of this belt for its standard time, instead of taking the time of the nearest large city, as before.

The map showing these hour divisions will now be easily understood. Five meridians of longitude fifteen degrees apart are selected to give time: the 60th, near Prince Edward Island, the 75th, near Philadelphia, the 90th, near St. Louis, the 105th, near Denver, Colorado, and the 120th, near Carson City, Nevada. Of course the time at the 60th is four hours earlier than London time. The time of

each of these meridians is adopted in the territory seven and a half degrees each side of the meridian. These divisions, fifteen degrees wide, are called the Intercolonial, which extends westward to Eastport, Maine; the Eastern, from that point to near Detroit, Michigan; the Central, from that point to Topeka, Kansas; the Mountain, from that point to Salt Lake; and the Pacific, from there to the ocean. These time belts extend from the meridian of $67\frac{1}{2}$ ° to $82\frac{1}{2}$ °; from this to $97\frac{1}{2}$ °; from this to $112\frac{1}{2}$ °; and from this to the Pacific Ocean. At 12 M. in the first, or Intercolonial division, it will be 11 A.M. in the Eastern, 10 A.M. in the Central, 9 A.M. in the Mountain, and 8 A.M. in the Pacific. At five minutes past 12 in the first it will be five minutes past 11, 10, 9, and 8 respectively in the other divisions. The minutes and seconds agree in all. The time varies by one hour as you pass from one division to the next.

Near the centre of each time belt the standard time is about the same as the true time. Toward the edges of these belts it varies more and more, until the difference becomes half an hour.

When it is a quarter past three at Eastport, it is a quarter past four at St. Stephen, New Brunswick, just over the river. There is the same difference between the standard time of Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, across the river. The boundaries of these belts will not always follow the meridian exactly; they will be arranged to suit the convenience of those living on the borders of the belt. North Carolina, for instance, is mostly in the Eastern division, and so the small part of the State situated in the Central division will probably adopt Eastern time; and Tennessee will adopt Central time, though a small corner of the State is in the Eastern division.

CHRISTMAS IN THE NORTH.*

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

FAR up in the Northern country,
When the bitter storm-winds blow,
Till heaped on field and highway
Are the frozen drifts of snow,

In the dawn of merry Christmas
Thatched roof and castle eaves,
Wall and turret and gateway,
Laugh under nodding sheaves.

For he would be hard and thankless,
The churl whose heart and hand
Should be closed to the birds that linger
Like orphans in the land.

* At Christmas in Norway and Sweden the people have a custom of placing bunches of grain on their roofs and fences to feed the birds.

To lofty homes and lowly
They flock, a cheery train,
To scatter their songs of summer
O'er their feast of winter grain.

Within, the innocent children
Carol of Christmas-day;
And without, the little pensioners
Are busy and blithe as they.

Bells, that with silvery cadence
Are ringing the Christmas in.
Lifting our thoughts to the Saviour
Who breaks the fetters of sin,

We list your sweet confusion,
And clear to our hearts ye say,
"Spare something out of your treasures
To feed God's birds to-day."

For he is a churl, and thankless,
Who fast locks heart and hand
At Christmas-tide to the needy
And the stranger in the land.



"THEY FLOCK, A CHEERY TRAIN."

"THE TREE TO JILLY'S."

A Christmas Story.

BY KATE UPSON CLARK.

I.

JUST on the edge of New Hampshire, an off-shoot of the White Mountains, and a part of its frowning, craggy mass jutting into Maine, stands Bear Mountain. One might think that nobody would have cared to live in such a wild and remote region, but there were many valuable farms scattered along the mountain-side, and the people who lived upon them thought, as perhaps everybody ought to think of the place where his lot is cast, that there was no spot in the world quite so good as Bear Mountain, and the "Medders" at its base.

Christmas, of course, came around once a year at Bear Mountain, just as it does everywhere else, but Santa Claus had never learned his way up its steep stony roads. Thanksgiving-day was the great festival in those parts, and the people hardly noticed when Christmas came.

Therefore, upon a certain December morning sixteen or twelve years ago, Farmer Daniels, who was one of the thriftiest and best of the Bear Mountain farmers, was rather surprised at what his wife said to him, just as he was about starting for "the store," "down to the Medders."

"It's comin' Christmas next week, 'Lijah,'" said Mrs. Daniels. "S'pose you jes' get a string o' beads or a kitty-corner shawl for Jilly—a sort o' Christmas present like, you know."

"Jilly" was Farmer Daniels's only child—a bright-eyed, winsome little lassie of fourteen, and far dearer to the rugged-faced old man than his own right-hand. Yet dear as she was, Jilly had never yet had a Christmas present. The very idea was so strange to Farmer Daniels that he thundered, "What?" at his wife almost before she had finished her sentence.

"Well," said Mrs. Daniels, by way of explanation, "I was readin' in that picture paper about what a fuss folks was makin' over Christmas, and how the youngsters enjoyed it, and bethinks me, 'How tickled Jilly'd be with a real Christmas present!' You know the crops have turned out first-rate, and I guess Jilly's as good any day as them city children, and oughter have as good things."

Shrewd Mrs. Daniels! She knew that this last consideration would weigh heavily with her husband. His "Jilly-flower," whose

real name of Louisa had been lost long ago in the pet name that he had given her, she not as good as any living girl! not to have as pretty things, and as many of them!

"Wa'al," said Farmer Daniels, after a moment's thought, "it's jes 's you say, mar" (all fathers and mothers upon Bear Mountain were "par" and "mar"). "I have been prospered, an' if I see a nice string o' beads an' a kitty-corner shawl, I'll get 'em for her Christmas present."

At just that moment in came Jilly herself, her brown eyes sparkling, and her cheeks rosy with exercise.

"Where you been, Jilly?" said Farmer Daniels.

"I've been down to the Bagbys', par," returned Jilly. "I walked down, but I had a ride home. I wanted to hurry and send some things by you—some clothes. They're worse off 'n ever. Jim's gone away again; and here's a lot o' my old things. It's all right, mar—they're too small for me. And here's a pie; I made it myself, so I can give it away, can't I, mar? You'll go around that way, and take 'em, won't you, par?"

"I don't know," grumbled Farmer Daniels, rather testily; "I don't know's I'm bound to support Jim Bagby's family—a shif'less, drinkin' fellow like him. He's drunk up his farm, and now he's off to sea, or somewhere, leavin' his folks for months at a time so. It's a shame."

"Well, they ain't to blame," pleaded Jilly; "and 'tain't much out o' your way, par. Mrs. Bagby's sick, and the baby's ailing. Oh, par, I do wish they could come up and live in the corn-house!"

The "corn-house" had once been really used for holding corn, but Farmer Daniels had made it into a little dwelling-house for one of his hired men a few years before. Will Daniels, however—Farmer Daniels's nephew—a young fellow of twenty-one or twenty-two, had come to live in his uncle's family now, and to help upon the farm, so that the tenant of the "corn-house" had been allowed to go. It had therefore lain empty for several months.

"I couldn't ever clect a cent o' rent. Besides," he continued, "they can keep a dog—that mis'able little yaller Jip—that ain't worth keepin', goodness knows. I guess they ain't sufferin'. But I'll carry your traps along, and I must hurry, if I want to get back in time for dinner."

This was very true, for the Bagbys lived on a little-used by-way, which would take the good man considerably out of the common and shorter road to "the Medders."

II.

When Farmer Daniels returned from his jaunt he had a wonderful story to tell.

"You never see anything like the way McAfferty's fixed up his store," he said. "He's made a new counter. It runs clear through the middle of the store, and is all covered with gimcracks. I never see the beat. There's dolls, 'n' carts, 'n' music boxes, 'n' lots o' things I never see nor heard on. 'Goodness, man,' says I, 'what's to pay?' 'Why, Christmas,' says he. 'When I went down to the city to stock up,' says he, 'everything was Christmas, 'n' they all says to me, 'Why, man, ain't you goin' to carry no Christmas stock back?' An' they at me, 'n' at me, so't last I bought more'n I'll ever sell, I'm afear'd.' He set out I'd got to buy a lot, but," winking very hard at Mrs. Daniels, "o' course I wa'n't any such fool's that. An' by-the-way, Jilly, McAfferty give me something for you. There it is in my overcoat pocket. It's mighty pretty, I tell you."

Jilly pulled a roll of paper from the pocket her father had spoken of, and spread it out upon his knees.

"Oh my!" she said, gazing at the great advertising card with eyes full of admiration. "Ain't it pretty! Just see, mar! A great big tree! And 'stead o' plums, it's got dolls and drums and trumpets; and there are little candles on it, and wreaths o' pop-corn; and there are little children dancing round it. Why, mar, this must be what you were reading about in the picture paper. It must be a Christmas tree."

"Yes, that's it," said "Par" Daniels.

"You never saw one really, did you, par?" asked Jilly, after a moment's silence.

"Can't say's I ever did, Jilly-flower."

"Wouldn't you like to see one, par?"

"Wa'al, yes, I might like it middlin' well, I sh'd say."

There was another little pause.

"I s'pose it's just a hemlock or a spruce tree out o' the woods, ain't it, par? And the pretty things just tied on?"

"I s'pose it is," admitted her father.

"You—you couldn't get one for me, come Christmas, could you, par, and let me tie on the things I've been knittin' for Will, 'n' mar, 'n' other folks?"

"Oho! that was what you was a-drivin' at, was it?" chuckled her father. "You're pretty cute, Jilly-flower. I knew you was up to something. Wa'al, yes, I s'pose I could cut down a nice hemlock, 'n' haul it up to the house here, but, land! what's the use?"

"I think it would be just splendid to have a party, and everybody bring some presents for their friends, and hang 'em on the tree. I'd tie 'em on, 'n' I'd fix up the tree lovely. And everybody'd have such a good time! Just think how little Katie Bagby's eyes would shine, par!"

"But a party'd make your mar an awful sight o' trouble," complained Farmer Daniels.

"Oh no, 'twouldn't. I'd make the ginger-cake and the riz cake myself, and do lots o' work. You know I'm a pretty big girl, par."

The upshot of this conversation was that on the following Monday morning the young people upon Bear Mountain were electrified by a sudden but most gratifying announcement—Jilly Daniels was going to have a Christmas party and a Christmas tree, and they were all invited. And would everybody please bring the Christmas presents they meant to give to their friends, and hang them on the tree? As if anybody on Bear Mountain was in the habit of giving Christmas presents! The whole idea seemed at first very ridiculous; but Jilly was a recognized authority among her mates, and even among older circles, and this fact, together with Mr. McAfferty's efforts to dispose of his experimental "Christmas stock," made people take to the new departure more readily than might have been supposed.

But the greatest sensation caused by the announcement of Jilly's project was in the humble home of the Bagbys.

"It's going to be a big green tree, with presents tied on," Jilly had explained to the entire family there, who listened with open mouths to her story.

"Presents for us?" asked Tom Bagby, the eldest boy, a little older than Jilly, but not nearly so large and strong.

"Some for you, maybe," said Jilly, encouragingly, "and your mar will fix your clothes up—won't you, Mrs. Bagby? for I want 'em to look nice; they're so sweet 'n' pretty when they're fixed up."

Mrs. Bagby signified her willingness to do the best she could in the matter. She was a depressed and spiritless-looking woman, just now nursing her baby, and holding its little blue toes out toward the fire, in order to warm them from its sickly blaze.

"Are you going to have anything to eat?" she asked.

The children awaited Jilly's reply to this question with great anxiety. They were victims to a constant and never-satisfied hunger, and clothes were an entirely secondary consideration with them. When Jilly said that she couldn't begin to tell what quantities of biscuit and pies and cakes were expected to figure at the "party," one could see that the little Bagbys were driven nearly wild.

As Jilly was getting into the sleigh to ride away, little Charlie Bagby came running to the door.

"May—may we bring Jip?" he asked, anxiously.

"Oh, I meant to have said Jip!" cried Jilly. "We want him to play some of his funny tricks to show the party. Yes, be sure and bring Jip."

Charlie went in, beaming; but Farmer Daniels was not so well pleased.

"That humbly yaller dog! I wouldn't let him in if I was you!"

III.

It is safe to say that not half the young people on Bear Mountain slept any to speak of on the night before the expected party, and when the great day dawned dimly through clouds of falling snow-flakes, which came down in just such a way as to make all the farmers predict "a long storm," probably the largest bucket that was ever made would not begin to hold the tears that were shed in the various homes of those invited to Jilly's Tree. But the older ones came bravely up to the help of the disappointed children, and news was brought to Farmer Daniels quite early in the day that great teams would be "hitched up," and unless the storm became very much worse, so as to make the roads impassable, which did not then seem likely, nearly all who were invited would come.

These tidings raised Jilly's drooping spirits, and the preparations for the party went merrily forward.

But it happened that in the calculations of the Bear Mountain farmers, as was very apt to be the case, the little Bagbys were not taken into the account at all. Even Jilly, in the many cares which the occasion had brought to her young mind, forgot them altogether, until the day was nearly spent.

As the hours went by and four o'clock came, they insisted upon being dressed, and then they sat and looked at each other in despair. They longed unutterably to go. What was the storm compared to that wonderful tree? Finally one impulse moved Tom and Katie and Charlie. They must go.

"I guess, mar," suggested Tom, timidly—"I guess we could get up to Jilly's. If we did get a little wet, Jilly'd dry us, and give us something awful good to eat."

"I know I could go without getting much wet," chimed in Katie.

"And me too," said seven-year-old Charlie. "I want to see Jilly's tree, 'n' have some o' Jilly's supper."

"You!" exclaimed their poor mother; "you couldn't ever get there in the world, Charlie. None of you could. It's awful hard walking in snow like that."

"Oh no, 'tisn't," disputed Tom. "And I'd help Charlie along, 'n' Jip'd show us the way if it grew dark. Besides, if we found it wasn't easy getting along, we'd come home."

They all united, upon this, to break down their mother's feeble opposition, and the result was that some minutes before the time which Jilly had set for them to start, three small figures "might have been seen," as the novel-writers say, issuing forth from the tumble-down home of the Bagbys, holding fast to each other's hands, preceded by Jip, barking furiously, and all of them determined to see "the tree to Jilly's" or to "perish in the attempt."

The shadows of the early night were already gathering when they left their home, and by the time they had reached "the woods," and through which most of their way would lie, it was very dusky indeed.

"Ain't you 'fraid, Katie?" asked Charlie, clinging hard to his little sister's hand.

"Not much," answered Katie, bravely, but nestling a little closer to Tom.

"Oh, 'tain't very far now, you know," said Tom, trying to think what he could say to keep up the courage of the younger ones. "Hi! there goes Jip into the bushes! What's he found? See how he jumps over the snow, Charlie—and he isn't near so big as you."

"No, he ain't," assented Charlie, wondering vaguely if the snow stuck in such lumps to Jip's feet as it did to his. Oh, how heavy his shoes were! What a long, long three miles it was up to Jilly's house!

"You know the tree 'll be all lighted up with candles," pursued Tom, detecting the quaver in Charlie's tired little

voice. "It 'll be awful pretty—and there 'll be presents for you and Katie and me."

"Yes," said little Charlie, dragging his feet more and more feebly, and wiping, for the thousandth time, the blinding snow from his tiny face.

"Yes, it 'll be splendid," went on Tom. "Warm, won't it, Katie?—very, very warm and nice, and likely's not they'll sing."

Charlie was exceedingly fond of singing.

"Seems 's if I could hear 'em now," he said, a little spirit creeping into his weary voice. The eyelids began to droop over his patient eyes. "I can hear 'em," he whispered, and then he fell into a little heap on the snow.

"No, you can't hear 'em either," shouted Tom, shaking his little brother, and trying to lift him up. "You're dreaming—that's all."

"I can hear 'em," murmured the drowsy child, resisting all Tom's efforts to rouse him.

"No, no; it's all a dream," cried Tom, in despair. "Here, Katie—he's so cold and tired!—just you pull that hand, and, Jip, you catch hold here."

So the little things tugged and tugged until the child was put upon his feet again, and was mechanically pushing his way as before through the deepening snow.

But Tom himself was about used up by this time. His efforts in rousing and helping to propel Charlie, and the hard work he had to keep his own frail little body going, had been too much for him. And at last Katie broke down and began to sob.

"I can't go any further, Tom," she said; "I can't! My feet ache so hard, and I can't push Charlie any more. Oh dear, I sha'n't see the tree! And, oh dear! oh dear!"

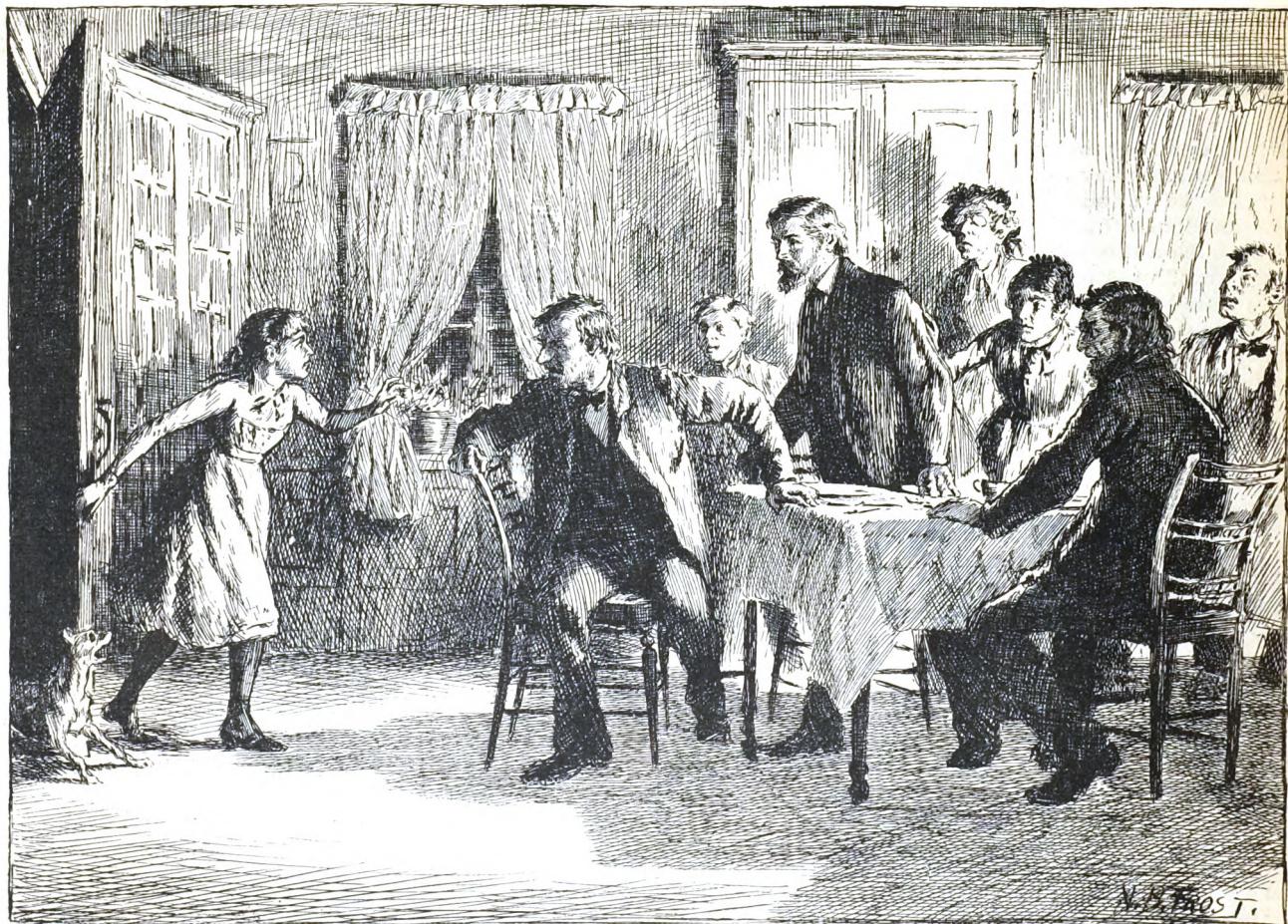
"Well," said Tom, stopping a moment to think, "may-be"—a new idea occurring to him—"if we should sit down here and rest a few minutes, we should feel all right."

The "stopping to rest" was a very unwise measure. Scarcely had they settled themselves upon a snow-bank, up against a sheltering evergreen, when Charlie fell hopelessly fast asleep upon Katie's shoulder, and Katie herself began to nod. Tom tried at first to keep them awake, but soon he too felt a drowsiness creeping over him that he could not shake off, and before he knew what was happening he was unconscious, and was beginning to fancy that he also was at Jilly's, gazing upon the beautiful tree, eating his fill of Mrs. Daniels's goodies, and hearing the songs which had seemed so sweet to little Charlie's sleepy ears. In a short time there was no movement among the group of children, and the falling snow had whitened their garments until nobody would suspect that they were anything more than a mound of earth covered with snow. Poor little Bagbys! If help did not come to them very soon, they would not only miss the "tree to Jilly's," but the life in their bosoms would be quite frozen out by the cruel, cruel storm. But whence was help to come?

IV.

Up at Jilly's things were going on in a merry fashion. Wagon after wagon had deposited its load of visitors, wraps had been taken off and laid away, and Christmas greetings had been exchanged on all sides. The supper had been a little delayed, as such affairs are apt to be, and the company were just sitting down at the long table in the great kitchen, when a "humbly little yaller dog," panting and shaking, but with unsupdued courage, came dashing up to the door. There he paused, only because he couldn't get in, and barked, scratched, and whined as hard as he could.

"What's that?" said Jilly, who heard the noise before any one else. She had said to her mother only a little while before that it was too, too bad that the little Bagbys couldn't come. If she had thought of it in time, she would have had Will go down and get them, hard as it stormed. But Jilly never thought, and neither did any one else, that those frail children would think of ventur-



M. J. FROST.

"IT'S THE BAGBYS' DOG,' SHE CRIED."

ing forth on a three-mile walk in such weather, much less that their mother would allow them to really set out. Then in a moment she recognized Jip's bark.

"It's the Bagbys' dog," she cried, opening the door. The strain of terror in her voice made it shrill and loud. The merry talk and laughter of the party around the long table ceased.

The instant that Jilly appeared at the door Jip started on a run down the road. Then he came back, barking again, and again he started off. Then he came back, looking with beseechingly human eyes into Jilly's pretty face.

That bright little girl dimly guessed the trouble.

"Hurry, par," she cried. "They're in trouble—the Bagbys—I know, and Jip's come for help. Oh, hurry! Maybe they're dying. Nobody'd know if they did die," she went on, eagerly. "It's awful to have them live away down there so."

"I don' know, I'm sure," said Farmer Daniels, hurrying on his great-coat in response to Jilly's command, and a good deal more stirred by her words than he would have cared to own. "I don't s'pose the little varmint knows what he's about, but I guess I'll go down the road a piece 'n' see. Is the lantern lighted, mar? All right."

"My horses are hitched up in the barn," put in Mr. Gad Daniels, at this point. "'Twon't hurt 'em to go a little further'n they've been, I guess."

In less than five minutes, Farmer Daniels, accompanied by two or three of the young men, each carrying a lantern, though for what purpose they did not exactly know, were riding down the road after Jip. "Likely's not," as the old farmer said, a trifle shamefacedly, "on a fool's errand" (which was "Bear Mountain" for "errand").

Jip seemed wild with joy, when his bright little dog

mind compassed the plan which was on foot, and he went barking on ahead, looking continually behind him to be sure that the team was following.

The snow had by this time ceased to fall, and the horses were able to make their way quite rapidly through the woods, and on to the spot where the little Bagbys had fallen asleep. Here Jip paused and began scratching excitedly in the snow. The men alighted and peered around with their lanterns.

"I declare to gracious!" called out Farmer Daniels, after a moment. "If they ain't here—them poor little things, a-sleepin' away as peaceful as if they was to hum in their beds!" And a tear fell from his eye into the pale face of little Charlie, whom, still warm but breathing hard, he was lifting into the sleigh. Tom was awakened very soon by rubbing and shaking him, and giving him a few drops from a flask of brandy which one of the party had been thoughtful enough to bring in his pocket; but the two younger children were helplessly drowsy, and the men could only shake the snow off them, and urge the horses up the hill as fast as possible.

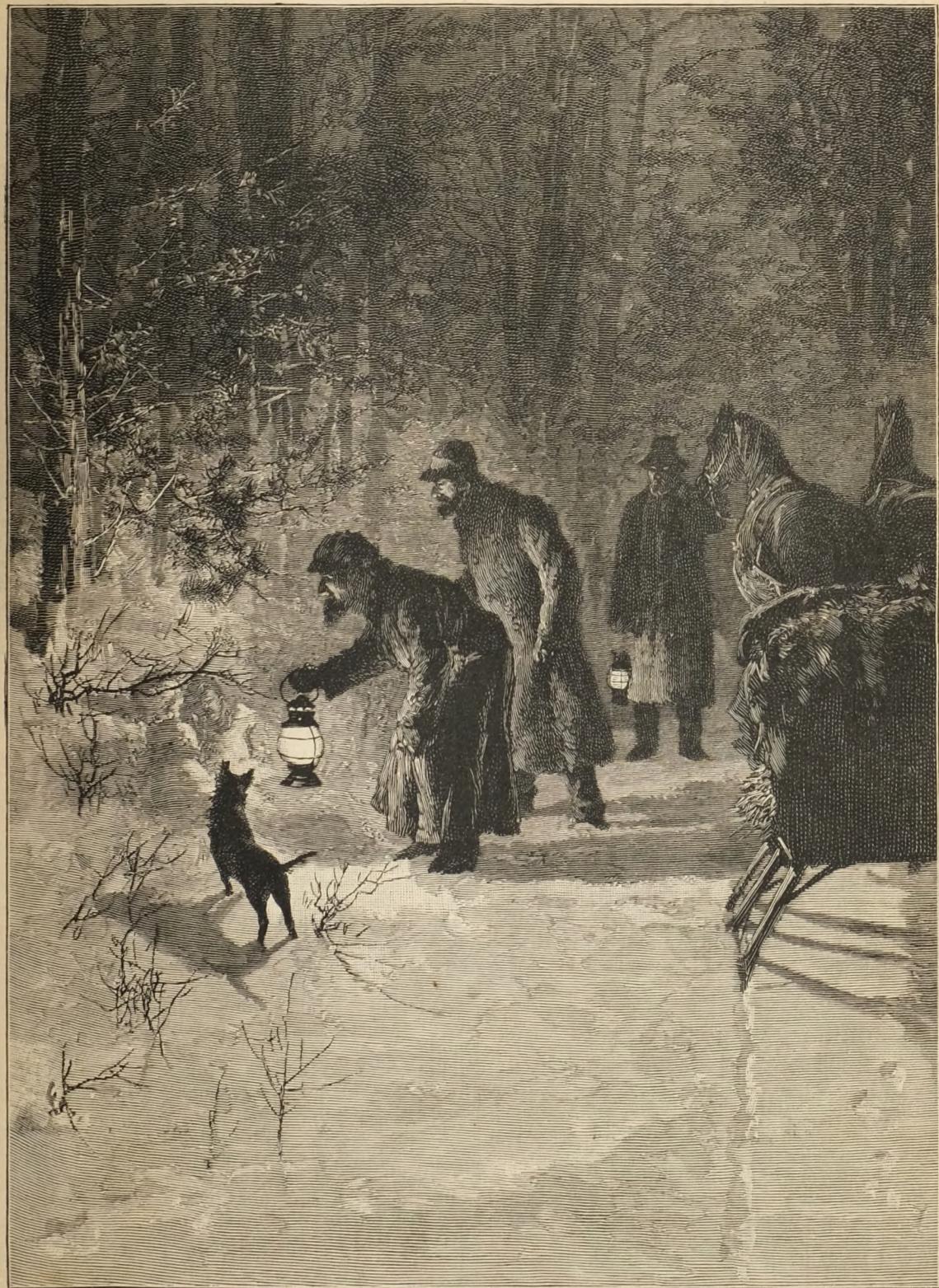
"Jump in, little fellow," said one of the men to Jip, as they were about starting. "You deserve a ride if anybody does! Who'd a thought a little yaller critter like you'd a been smart as this!"

They each gave Jip an appreciative pat, which made him prick up his sharp little ears, and look as proud and happy as a dog could; and you may be sure that a royal feast was set for him in Farmer Daniels's woodshed after they had reached the house, and the story of his exploits had been told.

Well, there was a doctor among the guests, and by the time the supper was quite over, the rescued children were

all clothed in dry garments. Everybody was petting them. Warm teas and gruels were made for them, the girls taking turns in stirring and administering them. The little Bagbys had never imagined so much happiness.

the surprise and admiration of the little Bagbys. The tall tree, which had had to be "lopped" a little, in spite of the fact that Farmer Daniels's house was pretty high "between joints," the wonderful and unheard-of toys and



"...IF THEY AINT HERE—THEM POOR LITTLE THINGS!"

But when the sitting-room was thrown open, and the fifty or more guests allowed to gaze upon the triumph of Jilly's art—THE TREE—you should have seen, amid all the surprise and admiration of the Bear Mountainites,

other presents which depended from its branches, the candles, the wreaths of pop-corn—these seemed to them like a vision of the Celestial City.

"Oh, it's prettier'n I dreamed it was!" whispered Char-

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lie, while his dazed little sister said to Jilly, "Did you get it in heaven, Jilly?"

"Oh no," replied practical Jilly Daniels; "par cut it up in the sheep pasture, and I strung the pop-corn on it myself, and tied the things on to the limbs."

The minister was there, and before the presents were taken from the tree he offered a short prayer, and gave them a little talk about the Christmas story—about the Child whose birth had given rise to the festival which they were celebrating, and who had made to the world the great gift of which all the love-gifts that we bestow are but a sign and symbol.

And then what jollity and fun held sway! How they laughed when a tiny toy whistle was taken off the tree for Farmer Daniels, who had never been able to whistle with his lips! And how they laughed again when a corn-cob fiddle was handed to Will Daniels, who was of a musical turn! And how pleased Jilly was when the "string o' beads" and the "kitty-corner shawl" were taken off for her! And the five-cent toys which Jilly had selected from Mr. McAfferty's "Christmas stock" for the little Bagbys—what a delirium of bliss they carried with them!

It was an evening long to be remembered, that Christmas-eve. And when the guests began to peer out of the windows, and to talk about going home, they found that the stars were shining, and that "the long storm" had turned out to be a pretty short one, after all.

"I'll take 'em home," said Mr. Gad Daniels, pointing to the little Bagbys, as the party was breaking up.

"No, you won't," said Farmer Daniels, who had seen Jilly's eyes fasten pleadingly upon him the moment that her uncle spoke. "Mebbe you might drive down 'n' tell Mis' Bagby they're all right. The goin's heavy, I know, but 'tain't so awful fur outer your way. They ain't fit to bear no more cold to-night. Poor little things! I sha'n't never forget how they lay there in the snow, cuddled up like a passel o' kittens, 'n' nothin' but that little yaller dog between them 'n' sartin death! Beats all!" But Farmer Daniels had no time to indulge in sentimental thoughts, for the good-byes were coming thick and fast, and he had work to do in seeing his guests safely off.

It was only a few days after this that Farmer Daniels took down his ox sled and "moved" Mrs. Bagby and her little brood up to the "corn-house," where they were happy enough under Jilly's fostering care. As for Jip, he had a lordly kennel built for him by Will Daniels, and though he is old and decrepit now, and lives entirely upon his past reputation, he never fails to prick up his ears and wag his tail when he hears the story of his brave deed upon that famous night when Jilly introduced Christmas upon Bear Mountain by means of her wonderful tree.

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

BY THE RIGHT REV. THOMAS U. DUDLEY.

MERRY Christmas! merry Christmas! Yes, my dearies, I hear you. You needn't scream quite so loud, though your old father is growing rather hard of hearing, because you may wake the blessed baby brother whose eyes have not yet opened to his first Christmas-day.

There, thank you, no more kisses, if you please, until after breakfast. You rascal! you have been firing crackers already; I smell that odious Chinese powder, and I dare say shall smell it all day long, and maybe it will make me think that Bridget has scorched the beefsteak, and then I won't have any merry Christmas thoughts in my heart for her.

But come, chickies, and tell me why do you think that Christian people all the world over are making such a hub-bub on this twenty-fifth day of December. Why is it that, for fifteen hundred years and more, men and women have trudged through December snow or slush, day after day,

and night after night, to the church, and worked hard in dressing it up with evergreens, so that the lily-white hands of the young ladies (didn't you hear your sister groaning over hers last night?) are scratched and torn and sore?

And then why is it that on this day of the year everybody wants to give some token of love to everybody else? Why is it that the dear old Santa Claus chooses to take such dreadful long journeys, at this the very worst season for travelling, and must come in a sleigh, whether there is any snow on the ground or not, all to bring toys and candies, fire-crackers, and doll babies, to fill up the stockings of good boys and girls?

Because it's Christmas-day? Yes, little todkin, that's the reason; because on this day our Father gave His best gift to the world—sent His own Son to be born as a little child. Therefore it is right that we be glad and rejoice; therefore it is fit that His churches be decorated as though to welcome the little Stranger and to keep His birthday. And because on this day the great love of our Father was shown to us, therefore we on this day give tokens of our love to our brothers and sisters. Yes, that's it; that's just the meaning of Christmas.

Has your wise big brother told you that many people don't believe that this gift came to us on the 25th of December? I shouldn't wonder if he had, for it is the fashion with a great many very small big men to startle people who don't know much with this kind of talk.

Did he tell you that December was a very rainy month in Judaea, and that shepherds would not then have been keeping watch over their flocks at night in an open field? Did he tell you that we ought to keep Christmas in October?

Well, dearies, if he or any other gentleman who is puffed up with a small quantity of knowledge tells you anything like this, you answer him that this day has been kept for over fifteen hundred years, and that you can see no reason for changing it now. Tell him that your father says that the very latest and fullest investigations of the subject by scholars who were not brought up to keep Christmas as we do go to prove that this is the very day on which the Christ was born; and then tell him that it does not matter whether we are celebrating the very day of His birth or not, so that we keep some day in honor of the inestimable gift of God to man.

Yes, my darling, that's right; play with your dolly. I know that father has been speaking big long words, and has been talking in a way you can not very well understand. But you must excuse him, for he wanted to say those few words to your big bumptious brother, and he hopes that he'll tell them to all his big-headed playfellows who think it manly to doubt everything which as children they believed.

I wish he had taken pains, instead, to tell you something about the way the old-time folk kept Christmas in the mother country from which our forefathers came. He didn't? No. I thought as much. I dare say he doesn't know anything about it, though he is fourteen years old, and wears long trousers.

Well, those old English people had more time for everything than we do nowadays, or at least they thought they had, and so they could keep Christmas much more fully than we do. So on Christmas-eve, after the prayers had been said in the church, or in the family if the church was too far away, they lighted some great big long candles, and they threw on the fire in the wide open hearth the biggest log they had been able to find in their forest. This log was called the *Yule*-log, or Christmas-block. I wonder if your smart brother knows that *Yule* is the word in old English for Christmas? Whether he does or not, this log was the measure of the Christmas holiday. Just as long as it burned, the merry-making was kept up, and for all that time there were no children in the school-room and no ploughmen in the field, but all was jollification.

tion and fun. Now just suppose you chaps had such a chance as that! I think you'd find the largest, hardest log that ever grew, and I rather think that some shrewd Yankee boys would hollow out a log and fit a piece of iron gas-pipe inside.

But fortunately they didn't have gas in those days, but only candles, for light, and so the holiday didn't last forever. But how long do you think it did last? Well, always until Epiphany, or Old-Christmas, January 6, for a log that would burn so long as that could easily be found without much search. But in the King's palace and in the homes of the more wealthy people they kept up the feasting for a much longer time, and carried it on with much more preparation. They appointed some gentleman to be the superintendent of the sports. Him they named the "Lord of Misrule," and his reign began on All-hallow Eve, and did not end until Candlemas-day. How long was that? Why, it was from November 1 to the 2d of February.

"Whew! what a good time those old folks had!" Yes, sir, I hear what you say, and they did have a jolly lot of fun. The Lord of Misrule, or the Abbot of Unreason, as they called him in Scotland, was busy providing entertainment for his subjects, and they had music, and conjuring, and dipping for nuts and apples, dancing, blind-man's-buff, and a lot of other games whose names only are known to us now. England certainly was "Merry England" in those days. And yet do you know that I fear that there was a vast deal of suffering among the poor even in the joyous Christmas-time, and that men and women and children were so busy with the merry-making that they forgot both to worship the Christ whose birthday they were celebrating, and to show the love to their fellow-creatures which Jesus was born to teach. And that is our danger now. There is always danger that men will forget that a *holiday* was first a *holy-day*.

You don't understand me? Well, let me try to explain. The Fourth of July is an American *holy-day*, because on that day our nation was born. And now that day is kept as a national *holiday*; our stores are closed, the wheels in our mills stop their clatter, and the men and women employed are free to amuse themselves. We meet together on that day, and march the streets with music and banners; we fire cannon; we make speeches; we toss our caps in the air, and hurrah for our government. But all this we may do, and yet forget the sacred principles that were born on the Fourth of July, and the duties that rest on every American.

Just so we may forget the Christ whose birthday we are rejoicing over even because of the means we use to show our joy. Oh, remember, my darlings, that this is the meaning of Christmas-day: that the good Father in heaven loves *all* His children, and that they must love one another; that on this day our Father gave what was dearest to Him to be our blessing and joy forever, and that all His children must on this day seek to give of their best things to make some other child happy.

Hurrah! here's mamma and the blue-eyed baby boy. Merry Christmas, mamma! merry Christmas, baby!

Run, dearie, and bring me the Book. Listen while I read how the shepherds kept watch in the field, and the angel came to wish them "Happy Christmas," how then the choir of heaven sang the praises of the new-born King. Then on our knees we'll praise Him for all His goodness to us, and He in heaven shall hear and be glad for the songs of your infant voices while we sing:

"Carol, carol, Christians,
Carol joyfully,
Carol for the coming
Of Christ's nativity.
And pray a gladsome Christmas
For all good Christian men.
Carol, carol, Christians,
For Christmas come again."

THE LOST CITY,*

OR, THE BOY EXPLORERS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

BY DAVID KER.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LOST CITY.

WITH the first gleam of daylight the next morning the boys were afoot, and soon left the valley and its encampment far behind them, plunging deeper and deeper into the heart of the mountains. Their usual good fortune appeared still to attend them, for in little more than half an hour from the start they caught sight of a bristly black head and a pair of huge curled horns rising from the crest of a projecting crag overhead.

"Ernie," whispered Tom, "creep round to the left and try to draw a bead on him. I'll go to the right. Be as quiet as a mouse, for he's a fellow worth having."

He was indeed. As Tom crept nearer, and got a fuller view of his game, he could hardly restrain a cry of admiration at sight of the magnificent creature, larger by one-half than any that he had yet seen.

Already Tom was just within range, when the crash of a falling stone, dislodged by his left foot, startled the goat, which darted away like lightning. Tom fired, but the animal bounded on unharmed. The next moment, however, came an answering shot from the other side of the cliff, followed by a shout of triumph from Ernest.

"I've hit him!" cried he. "Hurry up, Tom. I'm sure he can't go far."

The goat had sprung across the chasm separating the crag on which he had been standing from the main cliff, and was now flying along a kind of ledge upon the side of the latter. But here he was at a disadvantage, for the path was covered with soft earth that had slid down from above, into which his sharp, narrow hoofs sank deeply at every bound, while the boys, with their flat, broad-soled Afghan sandals, got over it easily. They gained rapidly upon their game, and might have shot it with ease, but unluckily neither had had time to reload.

"I don't care!" cried Tom, savagely; "I'll have him yet, if I follow him to China!"

Hardly had he spoken when the goat drew itself together, and went sliding down a descent so steep that at any other moment Tom would have thought twice about trying it. But now his blood was thoroughly up, and away he went, Ernest following.

The goat, having reached the ground below, started off at a pace which seemed likely to baffle the young hunters, after all. But his speed soon slackened, and it was plain that the wound given him by Ernest was beginning to tell.

"Hurrah!" cried Tom, "he's running right into a trap. We've got him now, safe enough!"

The frightened animal had indeed rushed headlong into a deep, narrow gully between two perpendicular cliffs, from which there was no outlet. The boys at once began to reload, while the goat, finding himself hemmed in, turned fiercely to bay, his great black head lowered threateningly, his terrible horns levelled for a decisive blow, and his eyes darting fire.

"What a splendid beast he is!" said Tom, admiringly. "I almost wish now that we hadn't meddled with him at all; but we'd better finish him at once than let him bleed to death from his wound. Here goes!"

His rifle cracked as he spoke, and the goat, with one convulsive spring, lay dead before them.

"Well hit!" cried Ernest. "There's meat enough there to feed twenty men; and when we get back—"

"Well, what then?" asked Tom, turning round in amazement at his companion's sudden pause.

"Are you sure, old fellow," said Ernest, gravely, "that we *can* get back?"

Tom started, and glanced keenly around him.

What place could this be into which they had penetrated so easily, but from which there was no return? All around the vast circular basin in which they stood black frowning precipices towered up grim and vast, upon whose perpendicular sides not even a chamois could have found footing. The gullies that branched off on every side only increased their misery by a delusive semblance of hope, all appearing to lead out of the fatal gorge, yet all ending abruptly at the foot of some unscalable precipice.

"We seem to have quite a genius for losing our way," said Tom, forcing a laugh; "but we can always go back to that place where we slid down, and climb up *there*."

Back they went, and sprang up the steep incline with all the briskness of revived hope, only to come sliding down again instantly, half buried in crumbling earth. Again and again they flung themselves upward, clutching and clawing at the treacherous surface with feverish en-

ergy. It was all in vain. As well might they have striven to find foot-hold upon running water as on this liquid soil, which poured down in streams at every touch. At length, bruised, spent, half stifled, dripping with heat, they desisted from the hopeless effort.

"Well," said Tom at length, "if we are lost, we needn't be starved too. There's meat enough on that goat to last us for a week, and Sikander's bound to find us before that. Come and help fix him for dinner."

The goat was quickly skinned, several large "chunks" cut from his side, and a fire having been kindled by flashing a charge of powder into the armful of fuel cut from a neighboring clump of thorn bushes, our castaways cooked and ate with a will.

"First-chop stuff," said Ernest, finishing his third slice; "but I wish we had something to wash it down with. I'm as thirsty as a Broadway car-horse in July, and these jolly old rocks don't look like having much water in them. However, let's see."

But in jumping up he stumbled and fell sprawling among the bushes behind him. Tom was just beginning

to laugh at this style of commencing the search, when Ernest cried, excitedly,

"Tom! come and look here!"

Tom did so, and started as if he had been stung. The brier clump, already thinned by their chopping, had given way altogether beneath Ernest's weight, and disclosed a smooth round opening faced with *hewn stone*.

Both boys stood silent for a moment, and then Tom said:

"Ernie, there have been men here before, and where one can get in another can get out. This must be an old water conduit, and we'll just creep through it. Come along."

The passage was so low that they were forced to crawl on their breasts, and the thick, close air seemed like a hand clutching their throats. Wriggling along in the darkness, Ernest shuddered at every contact with the slimy wall (taking it for the touch of a snake), and thought dismally of the possibility of their sticking fast in this hideous tunnel, and dying by a slow and horrible death. Just then Tom's voice reached his ears, harsh and hollow as if coming from the depths of the earth:

"Light, Ernie! — light ahead!"

The boys redoubled their efforts, and soon emerged into a scene which made them forget even the thirst that was torturing them. Through the heart of the mighty cliffs that rose hundreds of feet on either side ran a wide roadway straight and smooth as a railway cutting, and coming out a little way ahead of them into a vast circular space, overshadowed by a sharp peak behind it. In the centre of this space stood clearly out a snow-white row of tall, slender columns, of which any Greek sculptor might have been justly proud, while behind appeared the crumbling remains of other and lighter buildings.

But just then the sparkle of a tiny stream among the fallen stones blotted out every other thought till they

had plunged their hot faces into it and drunk their fill.

"Ernie," whispered Tom at length, as they rose to look around them, "it's my belief that we've found the Professor's 'Lost City.'"

"But didn't that Tartar say it was in the Tien-Shan?"

"Pooh! a Tartar's geography's never first-rate; and, besides, here's all that he described—the open space with the big building in front, the straight-cut roadway, the sharp mountain-peak, and— Hark! what's that?"

"It must be Sikander and his men coming to look for us," said Ernest, as voices were heard below them.

"Or somebody else and his men coming to murder us. We'd better just lie low till we see who they are."

They scrambled up the net-work of creepers twined around the nearest pillar, and had just time to conceal themselves behind the cornice above, when a dozen tall, gaunt, wild-looking men in tattered goat-skins and huge felt caps, with long guns on their shoulders, came gliding into the ruins, and halted in the very colonnade over which our heroes were perched.

A Disappointment



He
prishee, tell me wh're you live?
Oh Maid, so sweet and rare!"

She

"I am y'e miller's daughter, sir;
And live just over sh're"

He

Of all y'e Maids I ever saw,
You are beyond compare!"

She

"Oh; thank you, sir! Oh; thank you, sir!
Your words are very fair!"

He

"So I wld ask you something, now;
If I might only dare"

She

"Now, you may ask me wh' you please,
For anything I care."

He

"Then will you marry me? For we
Wld make a goodly pair."

She

"I thank you sir; your offer, it
Is most extremely rare.
But as I am already wed,
You're late, sir, for y'e Fair!"



At sh's y'e Bachelor walked away;
And talked to himself of sh' Lass so gay-
"Her hair is very decidedly red;
And her eyes have somewhat of a cast in her head;
And her feet are large; and her hands are coarse;
And, without I'm mistaken, her voice is hoarse.
'Tis a bargain of wh' I am very well rid;
I am glad, on y'e whole, I escaped as I did."

Howard Pyle.



OUR POST-OFFICE BOX.

Did you notice, boys and girls, that the Post-office Box was left out of the brilliant Christmas number which delighted your eyes last week? There were so many beautiful pictures, stories, and sketches that there was no room for you and me. But to-day, dear little ones, the happiest day of the whole happy year, comes just in time for your Postmistress to wish you a merry Christmas. I am sure the bright eyes that look at this page are full of fun and joy, and I know that part of the delight you feel comes from the share you have had in making others happy.

Of course, you will write and tell me how you spent the day.

This cunning little letter was duly mailed and sent to the person it was meant for.

FARMER'S DELIGHT, VIRGINIA.

DEAR OLD SANTA CLAUS,—I have been a good little boy all this time, and I have not stammered at all, and papa has given me all the nice books you brought me last Christmas. You must come and put some nice things in my stocking, but do not put any switches or ashes in it. Bring me a little balloon, a hatchet, candy, oranges, a steamboat, train, a horse and buggy, and a wagon. Put all the things you can not get in my stocking on a Christmas tree, which you will find in the conservatory.

I send you my love,
And send it by a turtle-dove.

Yours affectionately,

TONY PEETE C.

This was Santa Claus's reply
Dropped down from the morning sky;
Through the chimney did it fall,
Like a snow-flake soft and small.
"Switches, Tom, I never carry—
Not for you, nor Ned, nor Harry;
In my pack there is no place
For those badges of disgrace.
I have only books and toys,
Pretty gifts for girls and boys.
If I like good children best,
So, my dear, do all the rest.
Merry Christmas to you, dear,
Merry times the whole long year.
Now my steeds must hasten on,
For the night will soon be gone.
Good-by, Tommy; off I go—
Dancer, Prancer, Bounce, whoa!
Not so fast, for we must stop
At the next boy's house to drop
Something beautiful, because
All the boys love SANTA CLAUS."

If any child had a peep at Santa Claus, dear old fellow, with his white beard, his rosy cheeks, and his roguish look, that child was fortunate. Did some of you have Christmas trees? Did others surprise papa and mamma and the little cousins and playmates with pretty gifts it had been such hard work to hide? You see I know all about it, dearies. Santa Claus and I are intimate friends.

WHITE ROCK, NEVADA.

How I wish YOUNG PEOPLE came twice a week instead of once! There are five children in our family, and you should see all the heads clustered together over the nice paper when it comes. As

I have never seen a letter in the Post-office Box from this far-off place, I thought you might be glad to hear something about it. We live in a log cottage at the mouth of a very beautiful cañon, which is called Silver Creek Cañon, because of the many silver ledges which are contained in the mountains on each side of it. No large trees grow in this valley, but we have four pretty balm-of-Gilead trees in front of our house, which were brought from the mountains. Along the creek which runs through our ranch grow willows and very large wild rose-bushes, and from the creek we catch mountain trout and a few other fish. Hunters shoot deer in the mountains, sage-hens, prairie-chickens, wild-ducks, and other birds. Bears have been seen in the mountains and also lynx, and the other day we saw a wild-cat run along the hill at the side of our house. My cousin, with whom I live, has a good many mining claims, and he has given us children each a share in one called The Peerless. We hope it will be a rich mine. The air is so clear here that we can, from our house, see distinctly the Paradise Mountains, one hundred miles from here. We do not get at all lonely, although our nearest neighbor is one half-mile away, for we are so busy studying, working, and playing. I am ten years old, and have never seen my name in print. Will you please publish this letter, and oblige your young friend?

LUCY C. A.

Your name is quite worthy of the honor of being in type, and so I have placed you at the beginning of our Post-office Box this week. Are you not the least bit afraid when you see wild-cats stealthily slipping past the house? I fancy I would be; but Nevada girls, I suppose, become very brave.

KENTON, OHIO.

I wrote to you once before, but my letter was not printed, so I thought I would write again. I told you we had only one pet, but now we have several: a dog named Dick, and a canary named Bobby, and four Plymouth Rock chickens. I am nine years old. My brother Carl is seven. He is sick in bed, and has to take medicine every hour. He was not sick until this morning. We both go to school. I am in the Third Reader and Carl is in the Second. We have both been perfect in attendance this term. I have read YOUNG PEOPLE ever since I could read, and think it is splendid.

EARL E. R.

I hope the medicine poor Carl had to take was not very bitter, and I am sure he took it like a man, whether it was bitter or sweet.

ORCHARD HILL, HAMILTON, SCOTLAND.

I am a big boy of seven years. My sister Anna, who is eleven, gets HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE from a kind uncle in Chicago, who has sent it from the beginning. Anna likes it very much. One of the pictures, "The Holy Family," I have got hung in my room. I had a dear little canary, Meg; he was quite tame, but he died of asthma, so I got him stuffed and put on a bracket. I am going to get a Bantam cock and hen. I have three sisters, Hamilla, Tosh, and Anna. Please, kind Postmistress, put this in your paper.

P. LAURENCE R. M.

Thanks for the very pretty Christmas card, dear.

FRIENDSWOOD, INDIANA.

Grandma was sixty-nine years old the twenty-fourth day of last month, and we gave her a surprise party. According to arrangements, grandpa took her away from home on that morning, and the friends and neighbors came to her house with well-filled baskets, and when she got home the table was spread for dinner. And such a dinner! Just everything that was good. Perhaps you can imagine her surprise. There were over one hundred and twenty persons there. I made a cake from the receipt in YOUNG PEOPLE called "Grandma's Cake." I frosted it over with white, and then put the word "Grandma" on top of it with colored frosting, and gave it to her on her birthday. The ladies placed it in the centre of the table, and it looked very nice. I am going to school, and study arithmetic, history, reading, grammar, writing, geography, and spelling. I am eleven years old, but am in the class with those seventeen and eighteen years old. I have a brother Harry who is eight years old. He studies reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic. Our teacher is my uncle. One day the school-house caught fire during the time of school. It broke up the school for that day, but we put the fire out before it did much damage. The school is a mile and a half from our house. I have three cats, named Tippet, Bessie, and Goldilocks, and a calf named Gracie, and I have two dolls. I like YOUNG PEOPLE very much. I have been taking it nearly three years. I think the YOUNG PEOPLE is enough for me to read while I am going to school. What do you think? To-day is Saturday, and I must stop now to make some pies for dinner.

JULIA A. W.

I am sure if you read YOUNG PEOPLE through, you will get along very well, even if you have nothing else in the line of entertaining reading.

LEADING CREEK, WEST VIRGINIA.

I am so fond of reading the little letters that I thought I would write one. I have a good auntie in Ohio who sends YOUNG PEOPLE to my brother Bertie, and we all love it very much. I have three brothers, Bertie, Fred, and Carl, and four sisters, Bessie, Ethel, and Georgia, besides a sweet little baby four months old, who has no name yet. I am ten, and when I was six I pieced a quilt and sent it to the fair, and it took the premium, and when I was seven I pieced another and sent it, and it took another premium. I still have the red premium tickets, but I bought dresses with my money. I have to help do all the work, and can sew on the machine as well as any one, and can make a whole dress without any help. Do you think I may join the Little Housekeepers? I will send a receipt for ginger-snaps.

Boil together one cup of butter and one pint of molasses; when cold, add one table-spoonful of ginger and one large tea-spoonful of soda dissolved in one-fourth of a cup of warm water; then just add as little flour as you can roll with, roll thin, cut in shapes, and bake quick. They are very hard at first, but in a few days will almost melt in your mouth.

EDNA S.

Is the baby a boy or a girl?

You were very persevering to piece two quilts when you were so young, and I am glad they won a prize.

PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS.—Papa took me to Milwaukee to visit the Exposition, and I want to tell you about it. In the centre of the building is a large fountain, which throws water away up in the dome. Around the fountain are aquariums with fish. The prettiest were rainbow trout from California, speckled trout, and gold-fish. There were lovely pictures in the art gallery. There was a comical picture of a boy frightening the baby with a false face. There were two cute monkeys in cages. The museum was very fine; there were ever so many stuffed animals, skeletons, and geological specimens. I saw people making willow baskets and chairs, and weaving suspenders. There was pretty jewelry made of fish scales and alligators' teeth, and there were more nice things than I can tell. Papa took me to the Dime Museum too, where I saw a great many curiosities. Milwaukee is a beautiful city. Papa has gone to Boston. I wish I could have gone with him, and stopped in New York to have seen you. I am five years old. Mamma wrote a poem for me about the blue jay's nest. I will send it to you for the Post-office Box.

Your loving REX. W.

Rex printed his letter in splendid large letters, and did it all himself. Here is the pretty poem:

THE BLUE JAY'S NEST.

Rexie left a string
Hanging from a tree;
Blue Jay on the wing
Spied the treasure free,
Picked the string to shreds,
Straightway built a nest
Of twigs, moss, and threads,
All the very best.

One fine summer day,
In the nest so warm,
There three blue eggs lay,
Guarded from all harm.

When the tiny eggs
Change to birdlings three,
Then our Rexie begs
If the birds may see.

Papa lifts him high
Among the green boughs,
Where the birdies lie,
In their wondrous house.

For food each one calls
With mouth open wide;
Small, brown, fluffy balls,
Rexie's special pride.

Soon the birds have flown
From the parent nest,
Into large birds grown,
In blue feathers dressed.

Rex tells them "Good-by,"
Bids them come again,
And build their nests nigh
His home near the glen.

MAMMA.

The following little essay is ingenious, and deserves a niche in the Post-office Box.

A TRUE HISTORY OF LITTLE JACK HORNER.

BY JEANIE.

It seems strange that so little is in reality known concerning this important personage when we think that he is among the first historical characters with whom we become acquainted. Indeed, even before we leave the nursery we are generally very familiar with his name,

and also with that renowned act of his—putting his thumb in the Christmas pie. Indeed, so familiar with him have people become in the course of time that they call him *Little Jack Horner*. Witness the degree of familiarity; instead of speaking of him as *Mr. Horner* or *Mr. John Horner*, they omit the title altogether, change *John* into less respectful *Jack*, and add insult to injury by prefixing the adjective *little*. *Mr. Horner's* birth and parentage are obscured by the lapse of time, therefore his age is merely a matter of conjecture; but he must be very old, as the first we hear of him is through *Mrs. Goose*, near the middle of the eighteenth century, who commemo rates his extraction of a plum from a Christmas pie in a poem which reads as follows:

" Little Jack Horner sat in a corner,
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb and pulled out a
plum,
And said 'What a good boy am I.'

Now he must surely have arrived at *least* at the week of discretion, to be capable of such a wise action as pulling a plum out of a pie with his thumb. Therefore he must be something over a hundred years old at *least*.

Many points of his character may be drawn from the above poem. It may be inferred from the first line that he was of a morose and sullen disposition, or he would not have placed himself in a corner; also that he was selfish, or he would not have retired into a corner with the *pie*. He was evidently gluttonous likewise, or he would not have devoured a whole pie all by himself, that is, unless it was a very small pie; but this one was undoubtedly large, for was it not a *Christmas pie*? and does not the very word *Christmas* suggest *generosity*? Therefore it may be concluded that the pie was a large pie, and that *Little Jack Horner* was gluttonous. Besides being gluttonous in general, he was evidently very fond of *pie* in particular, or he would not have prolonged the eating of it by pulling out a plum at a time.

He was, in addition to all this, sagacious, or he would not have put in his *thumb* to perform the extraction. *Common* people would very likely have used a fork or spoon, or even a *finger* instead of a thumb. Which thumb Jack used, whether the right or the left, can only be surmised. Lastly, he was very complacent over the performance, for does he not commend himself? "What a good boy am I!" You see he thought he was a very good boy, and not only *thought* it, but *said* it; therefore he thought very well of himself, and to think well of one's self is to be self-complacent.

It may be as well to find out as much as possible about the *pie* in connection with its owner and demolisher, Jack, as Jack and the pie are now inseparable. First we know it was a *Christmas* pie, for does not *Mrs. Goose* tell us so? and is not her word indisputable? Next, a *Christmas* pie is a *generous* pie, as was concluded a few moments ago, and a generous pie is of necessity a large pie; consequently, it was a large pie. Then it was certainly a *plum* pie, or Jack could not have pulled out a plum when he inserted his thumb. And *Mrs. Goose* would not have said a *plum*, but the *plum*, if there had been no more. Therefore we know the pie was a *Christmas* pie, a *plum* pie, and a large pie, and *Jack Horner* is over a hundred years old, and was retiring, gluttonous, selfish, particularly fond of pie, sagacious, and self-complacent.

DES MOINES, IOWA.

I wrote you a long letter just one year ago, after we came home from California; but you did not publish it, and I felt very sorry. Now I will try again. I am nine years old now. I go to the Garfield School. It is on the same street where I live. My brother Paul goes there too, and Helen, my sister, twelve years old, goes over to the Callanan College. We have a little burro that takes Paul and me all around in a cart. Sometimes Paul rides on his back. His name is Archie. We have four canary-birds, and a nice horse that my sister rides; his name is Dan. We let a man take him for the winter, as he got so frisky. Next spring we are all going East, and I am going to call and see you, then go up to St. Mary's Hospital and see the cot and little Oscar, if he is still there. After we visit our friends in New York and New Jersey, we are going to Europe with papa in June, and expect to stay a year.

BLANCHE H.

I shall be very much pleased to see you, little Blanche, and also Paul, if he will come with you to call on the Postmistress.

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

We had a grand Exposition here, and it drew a large crowd. Nearly a million people passed through the turn-stiles. They had a train of cars running by electricity, and there was a little engine, the smallest engine in the world, that a thimble could cover. Also the pillar of salt, "Lot's wife," and one of my little class-mates tasted it, and wanted me to taste it, but I did not want to be a cannibal, and so I refused to taste Lot's wife. Also there were some little chickens hatched out by electricity, and they called them

orphans. We got seven. President Arthur came the first day. Did you come to see the Exposition? My papa is an artist, and had a portrait of General John C. Breckinridge in the art gallery. There were so many pretty things there that I could not begin to describe them all to you.

MAMIE M.

A Postmistress must stay at home and look after her letter-box, dearie, so I could not attend your fine Exposition. But I am sure, from what you and my other little friends have written, that it was a great success.

COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA.

I have had *YOUNG PEOPLE* since last Christmas. It was given me for a present, and I like it so well that I can hardly wait for Tuesday to come. I am a little boy ten years old. I study arithmetic, spelling, and reading, and I have drawing and writing lessons. My papa took me up to Wall Lake, where I went fishing, and had a nice time. We used to live in Lewis, Cass County, Iowa. We had a house and a pretty yard, and lots of apples, plums, and cherries, and other fruits. I have a little brother two years and a half old. He is very sweet, and full of mischief and fun. We used to have a dog named Panic, which we loved very much, but papa sold him.

ERNST F. O.

KYLE, TEXAS.

We are two little boys, eight and six years old. We live on a farm, and papa has lots of horses and cows. He is going to buy us a pony, and we want Santa Claus to bring us a saddle. We have a little brother named Sidney, just two years old, and when we say our lessons to mamma, he wants to say his. We can't read very well, but mamma reads *YOUNG PEOPLE* to us, and we like the Post-office Box best of all. Mamma takes the BAZAR. Good-by. CARROLL and LEE D.

Perhaps Santa Claus will see this letter, and slip a saddle into his pack for you.

The Postmistress thanks the following little friends for their letters, which she has not room to publish, though they have been read with much pleasure: Philip A. R., Willie F. H., Emily and Josephine, Harry D. H., Nita F., Willie M. S., M. G., Mamie H., Blanche B., Van B., Miriam F., Elsie H., Daisy and Grace M., Kendall B. C., May M. W., Albert Charles A., Millie G. B., Lizzie H., C. G. P., Fred P. D., M. L. D., Lillie B., Lulu R. K., Tina M. D., Edgar S., Amy W., John C., Lettie M. M., Clarence C., A. and B., George M., Florence C., Judy B. McM., Arthur William B. J., Alice G., Nellie B., Ella C. R. and Rosa W.—Credit for excellent Indian summer letters is due to Lottie P., Carrie E., Samuel J. E., Edna H., Alice, Mamie D., Newell D., Frank G. B., Horton S. A.—That of Alice A. E. is very good indeed, and I am sorry that only my eyes will read it.—An excellent effort was also made by F. L. K., of Alabama.—The "three little" T.'s and Jennie A. will please accept thanks for fragrant flowers and mistletoe.—M. C.'s chestnutting rhymes were very clever.

Last week we spoke of the sad and sudden death of a reader of *YOUNG PEOPLE*, owing to the accidental discharge of a gun. A few days since, a little fellow in Brooklyn was popping away at the sparrows with a toy rifle, when a companion, running past, was struck and wounded in the cheek and tongue, having two teeth knocked out by the toy bullet. This child might easily have been killed by his playmate, had the ball gone only a little higher or lower. And what fun can there be in firing at the poor sparrows? I should think a boy would rather feed them. The Postmistress hopes that the boys who read this paper will firmly resolve to have nothing to do with such reckless sport.

WE lately received a complaint in regard to an advertisement that was printed in this paper a few weeks ago, and we at once took steps to prevent its re-appearance. We shall be much obliged if our readers will at once refer to us any complaints they may have to make in regard to advertisements.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

The whole is a proverb of 39 letters, which means that we covet comforts we are too lazy to work for. The component parts together form the dishes of a feast.

The 33, 23, 5, 17, 6, 19, 34, 3, 15 is celebrated in old England.

The 36, 28, 30, 10, 17 always have merry thoughts.

The 4, 18, 8, 22, 11, 37, 35 is popular at a beach picnic.

The 25, 23, 19, 17, 32, 3, 35 is able to hold fast.

The 17, 5, 10, 13, 26 needs to be well dressed.

The 2, 23, 14, 19, 35, 3, 5, 26 is not wholesome for dyspeptics.

The 19, 9, 1, 14, 12, 35 is not agreeable in a melting mood.

The 19, 20, 27, 17 appears at Easter, with a special sign.

The 19, 16, 17, 4, 24, 16, 29 should be hot and light.

The 4, 33, 3, 31, 17, 34 comes with the dessert.

The 7, 13, 21, 31, 35 is one of our purest blessings.

The 7, 16, 27, 3 is of doubtful advantage.

The 4, 8, 15, 36, 38, 31 is offered by your Turkish entertainer.

The 29, 13, 35, 32, 17 were once made by the Queen.

The 36, 35, 20, 16, 39 is the crown of the harvest and the feast.

DAME PLAYFAIR.

No. 2.

ENIGMA.

My first is in mist, but not in fog.

My second is in rain, but not in snow.

My third is in sunbeam, but not in glow.

My fourth is in tree, but not in log.

My fifth is in lover, and too in lass.

My sixth is not in looking-glass.

My seventh is in trot, but not in walk.

My eighth is in compliment, not in talk.

My ninth is in year, but not in day.

My whole gives rise to laughter gay.

MOTHER BUNCH.

No. 3.

A RIDDLE.

Why should we never tell secrets in a corn field?

ISADORE F.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 213.

No. 1. R ang E.
A gai N.
L ongin G.
E e L.
I ndi A.
G ai N.
H an D.

No. 2. D
P E A
P E S T S
D E S T R O Y
A T R I P
S O P
Y

No. 3. Book.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from May H., Roy W. Osborne, Edward F. Lawler, Jennie Fisher, Dottie M., Lawrence T., Mary E. Bidwell, Susan Barnett, Aimee R. and Fannie R. Dryden, Flora Reinemann, Edwin F. Pollock, Lottie Lee, Amber Hylton, Sophie and George Cook, Tony B. Gaynor, Little Fidget, Harry Kentett, Dick Yancey, Lulu Green, Morris Sanborn, V. L. D., Archie G., Olive and Lidie, Omaha, Robin Dyke, Budge, M. H. Sullivan, L. S. Starrett, S. Graeme Turnbull, Emma W. Gleason, Top, M. F. To Plitz, John S. Brown, Lulu Mitchell, Andrew Van Orden, Anna Greenleaf, Elizabeth Beattie, Nat C., and Eva McK.

